

Partnership in Christian Mission: A History of the  
Protestant Missionary Movement

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## **Declaration**

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities, Development, and Social Science, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.

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Date

## Abstract

Despite the fact that *partnership* has been a pronounced goal in ecumenical relationships for over eighty years, the realization of mutuality, solidarity, and *koinonia* has, even until present times, proven to be illusive. This fact raises a number of questions. First, why is this so? What were the historical antecedents that led to the concept of partnership? What were the original secular and religious contexts in which the term partnership was used, and how has its meaning been understood and contested over time? And secondly, what can we learn from this history? Are there any problematic issues or themes that repeatedly appear in the narrative, causing churches to continually fall short in these relationships?

In seeking to answer these questions, this thesis will trace the history of ecumenical partnerships from its antecedents, found in the beginning of the modern Protestant missionary movement, through to current times, focusing on the relationships between churches historically involved in the International Missionary Council (IMC) and, after 1961 when the IMC integrated with the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME). Importantly, Lamin Sanneh's typology of churches as either Global (the churches of the North or Western world, also formerly known as 'sending' or 'older' churches) or World (the churches of the South and East, formerly known as 'receiving' or 'younger' churches) will be the lens used to understand these ecumenical relationships. Using this typology, each of the chapters that form the main body of this research focuses on a different era of history and will follow a similar pattern. The first section of each chapter serves to situate the church's partnership discourse in its secular setting, paying special attention to issues pertaining to North/South political and economic power, as well as how power has been contested. The remainder of each chapter will trace the ecumenical history of partnership, focusing especially on the discussions and findings of world ecumenical mission meetings, starting with The Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions in New York in 1900. While the main emphasis will be on these ecumenical meetings and their findings, attention will also be given to individuals and events that played significant roles in the development of the understanding and practice of partnership. Significantly, at the conclusion of each chapter four prominent themes or issues will be traced which continually reappear in the narrative and make partnership difficult to realize.

When reviewing this history, it is evident that the term *partnership* was a product of colonial times and therefore captive to colonial and, later, neocolonial interpretations. However, it is also clear that from the very beginnings of the modern Protestant missionary movement some church and missionary leaders, from both the Global and World churches, have sought to ground partnership in Biblical, egalitarian, and liberationist understandings. While this can serve to encourage those involved in partnership today, the historical analysis also shows plainly four key themes or issues that continually make the attainment of equitable relationships impossible to realize; namely, the *home base*, *humanitarianism* and *development*, *authority*, and *rhetoric* and *reality*. It is clear that the differences in worldviews, as described by Sanneh's typology, have had and continue to have detrimental effects on the relationships between the churches of Global and World Christianity. Given this history, it is asserted in this thesis that for ecumenical partnerships to have any chance of overcoming these issues, the churches of Global Christianity must stop seeing mission as expansion and lose the desire to remake others in their image; in short, they must become, in their worldview and ethos, World churches.

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## List of Abbreviations

AACC	-	All Africa Conference of Churches
ABCFM	-	American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions
ABFMS	-	American Baptist Foreign Missions Society
ABMU	-	American Baptist Missionary Union
AHMS	-	American Home Missionary Society
AIC	-	African Independent (or Indigenous, Initiated) Churches
BMS	-	Baptist Missionary Society
CBMS	-	Conference of British Missionary Societies
CCIA	-	Churches Commission on International Affairs
CCPD	-	Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development
CEVAA	-	Communauté Évangélique d'Action Apostolique
CMS	-	Church Missionary Society
CWM	-	Council for World Mission
CWME	-	Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
DICARWS	-	Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee, and World Service
DICASR	-	Department of Inter-Church Aid and Services to Refugees
DWME	-	Division of World Mission and Evangelism
EACC	-	East Asian Council of Churches
EATWOT	-	Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians
ESP	-	Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel
ESR	-	Ecumenical Sharing of Resources
FMENA	-	Foreign Missions Conference of North America
GMS	-	Glasgow Missionary Society
IMC	-	International Missionary Council
IRM	-	<i>International Review of Mission(s)</i>
JAM	-	Joint Action for Mission
LMS	-	London Missionary Society
NIEO	-	New International Economic Order
PBFM	-	Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions
PCR	-	Programme to Combat Racism
SMS	-	Scottish Missionary Society
SPG	-	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
SVM	-	Student Volunteer Movement
WCC	-	World Council of Churches
WMMS	-	Wesleyan Missionary Society
WSCF	-	World's Student Christian Federation
YMCA	-	Young Men's Christian Association

## Chapter 1

### Problems with Partnership in Protestant Mission: The Need for a Historical Analysis

For the past few decades, mission agencies and churches around the world have tried to work in cooperation and mutuality. The operative word today for these ecumenical relationships is ‘partnership’.<sup>1</sup> While many churches and mission agencies use this term to describe their ecumenical relationships, this study seeks to focus on partnerships as they exist between what Lamin Sanneh calls the churches of Global Christianity (the churches of the North or Western world, also formerly known as ‘sending’ or ‘older’ churches) and the churches of World Christianity (the churches of the South and East, formerly known as ‘receiving’ or ‘younger’ churches). In making this distinction, Sanneh defines Global Christianity as ‘the faithful replication of Christian forms and patterns developed in Europe. It echoes Hilaire Belloc’s famous statement, “Europe is the faith.” It is, in fact, religious establishment and the cultural captivity of faith.’<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Sanneh notes that World Christianity ‘is the movement of Christianity as it takes form and shape in societies that previously were not Christian, societies that had no bureaucratic tradition with which to domesticate the gospel. ... World Christianity is not one thing, but a variety of indigenous responses through more or less effective local idioms, but in any case without necessarily the European Enlightenment frame.’<sup>3</sup>

While the term partnership has been used to describe the relationships between Global and World churches, finding concrete ways in which to live out mutuality and solidarity has been, to say the least, problematic. As someone who is involved in ministries of Global/World partnership, a number of questions come to mind. First, why is this so? What were the historical antecedents that led to the concept of partnership? What were the original secular and religious historical contexts in which the term partnership was used, and how has its meaning been understood and contested over time? Secondly, as one who comes from a Western background and

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<sup>1</sup> Kai Funkschmidt, ‘New Models of Mission Relationships and Partnerships’, *International Review of Mission* 91 (October 2002), p.558.

<sup>2</sup> Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity?*, p. 22. Sanneh notes that the primary cause for the distinction between Global and World Christianity was the use of the vernacular in transmitting the gospel, especially in regards to the translation of scripture. While the use of European languages allowed missionaries to maintain control of the message, ‘with the shift into native languages, the logic of religious conversion assumed an internal dynamic, with a sharp turn away from external control.’ Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity?*, p. 24.

represents a church mission agency in the North, what lessons can we, the churches of Global Christianity, learn from this history? Although there have been and still are impediments to partnership by all involved, what specific issues have caused those of us from the churches of Global Christianity to continually fall short in these relationships?

In searching to answer the first of these questions, this dissertation will seek to understand the problems inherent in these relationships by studying the history of the concept and practice of partnership. Each of the following eight chapters that form the main body of this research focuses on a different era of history and will follow a similar pattern. The first section of each chapter serves to situate the church's partnership discourse in its secular historical setting, focusing especially on issues pertaining to North/South political and economic power, as well as how power has been contested. The remainder of each chapter will trace the ecumenical history of partnership from the beginning of the modern Protestant missionary movement right through to current times, focusing especially on the discussions and findings of world ecumenical mission meetings, starting with The Ecumenical Conference of Foreign Missions in New York (1900) and ending with the latest assembly of the World Council of Churches in Porto Alegre (2006). While the main narrative focuses on ecumenical gatherings, emphasis will also be given to individuals and events that played significant roles in the development of the understanding and practice of partnership.

The study of the historical development and understanding of partnership is important today, for when looking at the literature currently available, there seems to be much discussion on practical contemporary issues such as the sharing of resources or personnel, but very little on the history of Global/World relationships. Partnership is only mentioned in brief passages in David Bosch's *Transforming Mission* or Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder's *Constants in Context*. In J. Andrew Kirk's *What is Mission?* an entire chapter is dedicated to this subject (Chapter 10 – Sharing in Partnership); however, only a few paragraphs are dedicated to how partnership has been understood historically.

To date, the most complete study on this topic has been done by Lothar Bauerochse in his book *Learning to Live Together: Interchurch Partnerships as Ecumenical Communities of Learning*. Although Bauerochse's main focus involves case studies on the relationships between German Protestant churches and their

African partners, the first section entails an historical analysis of the term ‘partnership’. In his analysis, Bauerochse states that ‘the term partnership is a term of the colonial era. ...[It] is a formula of the former “rulers”, who with it wished to both signal a relinquishment of power and also to secure their influence in the future. Therefore, the term can also serve both in colonial policy and mission policy to justify continuing rights of the white minority.’<sup>4</sup> This understanding then serves as the lens through which he interprets the partnership discourse, reminding the reader that although the term was meant to connote an eventual leveling of power dynamics in relationships, it was also used by those with power to ‘secure their influence in the future’. This analysis is largely true. As we will see in chapter three, when the term partnership was introduced into the colonial debate, it was closely aligned with the concept of trusteeship. Later, as will be discussed in chapter six, the term partnership was also used in the late colonial period by the British as a way to maintain their colonies while offering the hope of freedom in the future; a step forward from trusteeship, but short of autonomy and independence.

During colonial times, once the term partnership was introduced into ecumenical discussions, many arguments identical to those used by colonial powers for the retention of their colonies were used by church and missionary leaders to deny autonomy to the younger churches. Later, when looking at partnership in the post-World War II era of decolonization, Bauerochse admits that partnership was beginning to be used in the ecumenical movement to connote relationships much different than those proposed by British colonial policy. However, he also states that ‘if we consider ... the way the British idea of partnership was fitted into the entire context of the coming into being of the commonwealth (“a unity with joint ideals, a unity of freedom, as an example for the world”) structural parallels are also apparent here.’<sup>5</sup>

While admitting that much of what Bauerochse writes is, in the main, true, to interpret the history of ecumenical partnerships solely through this lens does not seem to give an entirely accurate interpretation of events. While the term ‘partnership’ may

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<sup>4</sup> Lothar Bauerochse, *Learning to Live Together: Interchurch Partnerships as Ecumenical Communities of Learning* (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2001), p. 92-93; Funkschmidt agrees, noting that in secular use, the history of the word goes back to the ‘1920s colonial discussion, when the British wanted to keep control while granting some autonomy, and coined the term “partnership” to describe this new relationship.’ Funkschmidt, ‘New Models of Mission Relationships and Partnerships’, p. 558.

<sup>5</sup> Bauerochse, *Learning to Live Together*, p. 93.

indeed be a product of colonial times, it is argued here that the antecedents for an alternative interpretation, one focused on equality and mutuality, have been present for at least two centuries, going back to the beginnings of the modern missionary movement and the formation of mission societies. Missionary statesmen such as Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn emphasized the planting of self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating churches, as well as the importance of vernacular translation of the scriptures. Importantly, and distinct from colonial policy which stressed that a people should be mature enough (as judged by Western standards) to govern themselves before power could be devolved, these early missionary leaders believed that the only way for local churches to grow was to have authority, power, and leadership devolved to them at an early stage, without putting an emphasis on the emerging World churches necessarily showing themselves worthy, responsible, or having ‘caught up’ with the churches of Global Christianity.

Therefore while admitting that its secular use originated in the colonial discourse, when injected into ecumenical discussions at the beginning of the twentieth century, the term was also infused with an alternate meaning; the ideal of relationships between autonomous churches, regardless of cultural differences, age, or maturity, being draw together by God’s Spirit. Instead of partnership simply being co-opted by the ecumenical movement to protect Global Christian hegemony, I believe that the interpretation and use of partnership was contested from the very beginning of its utilization in describing Global/World relationships. In this study, this dichotomy is vital for understanding and interpreting the historical narrative. From the beginning of the narrative until the 1960s, colonial arguments and interpretations tend to dominate the discourse. And although after this time blatant paternalism was rarely expressed openly, it is clear that many latent feelings of superiority and paternalism can be seen in the way many Global Christian partner churches related (and still relate) to those of World Christianity. However, one also needs to recognize that, just as colonial interpretations linger today, conversely and differing from Bauerochse’s interpretation, I believe that, far from simply being a post-World War II phenomenon, an alternative view of partnership was already present. Thus, later in the narrative, when ecumenical gatherings used words like solidarity, fellowship, and *koinonia* to describe partnership, they were not simply products of post-colonial discourse, but could trace their understanding from the very inception of the modern missionary movement.

While an historical analysis of partnership's understanding and use in the ecumenical movement is helpful and worthwhile in itself, it can also serve a larger purpose. As Bauerochse notes in his study, '[historical] recollection can be an important aid in understanding current problems and difficulties in partnership relations ... and can also provide a stimulus for developing new forms of such relationships.'<sup>6</sup> In this spirit, this thesis will follow or trace four themes or issues that, given the contested history described above, seem to constantly reappear in the historical narrative and which, especially for those of us from a Global Christian perspective, continue today as barriers to living out relationships of mutuality. While each theme is treated as a separate issue, it must be noted that in reality they all touch, influence, and reinforce one another, each contributing in its own way to the problem of living out partnership. It should also be noted that while it will be more obvious in some themes than others, the *contestation of power* is inherent in all four, especially during and after the period of decolonization.

The first theme focuses on the issue of the *home base*, or those that made up the constituencies of Global Christian churches. From the beginning of the modern missionary movement, it is clear that overseas mission was the purview of a small minority of Global Christians who believed that it was their calling to tell others about Christ. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, while missionaries felt there was a divine mandate to share the gospel, they struggled with how to excite the masses of church members back home to support them. In addition, those that did give their support saw the missionary vocation as simply planting Global Christianity into foreign mission fields. As the World churches grew and took on more responsibility for their own futures, missionary leaders similarly struggled with how to convey this new reality to the average church member.

As early as 1928, after the Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council, it was noted that devolving power was one of the goals of mission. However, it was also realized that 'the transference [of responsibility] cannot for long go any faster or further than the home boards permit; and the action of the home boards is conditioned by the informed interest of the Churches they represent. They in turn cannot for long go faster or further than the Churches allow.... The man

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<sup>6</sup> Bauerochse, *Learning to Live Together*, p. 2.

[sic]in the pew is therefore the man that matters.’<sup>7</sup> While today the leadership of many Global Christian churches continue to try and educate their members on issues of partnership and solidarity, it remains clear that a great number of the ‘people in the pews’ still think in the ‘old ways’. The object of mission is not partnership, but remains ‘our’ sharing of what ‘we’ know, passing along our knowledge and faith without seeking to listen to, understand, or learn from others. Thus, since ‘people in the pews’ are the ones who give and support the Global Christian churches, even those directly involved in ecumenical partnerships who are striving to live in solidarity with their sisters and brothers in World Christianity must take into consideration the views and attitudes of their constituents.

A second theme focuses on the issues of *humanitarianism and development*. Humanitarianism and the development of others have, from the beginning, played a part in the motivation of missionaries and their supporters. And, according to Neta C. Crawford, since the beginning of colonialism, humanitarianism has historically been lived out in two very distinct ways; what she calls aggressive and reformist.<sup>8</sup> Aggressive humanitarianism is ‘exercised through discipline, socialization (eliciting compliance by instilling in the other a coincidence of interests and beliefs) and surveillance.’<sup>9</sup> According to Crawford, ‘[aggressive] humanitarianism became dominant as colonial powers used anti-slavery arguments to justify greater intervention and colonial settlement.’<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, reformist humanitarianism focuses on the excesses of colonialism/neocolonialism and the exploitation of the colonized, with calls that those in power should not simply seek profit but also work for the benefit of all.<sup>11</sup> After World War II and with the beginning of decolonization,

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<sup>7</sup> A.M. Chirgwin, ‘The Jerusalem Meeting and the Man in the Pew’, *International Review of Missions* 17 (1928), p. 530.

<sup>8</sup> Neta C. Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics: Ethics, Decolonization, and Humanitarian Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 201.

<sup>9</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, p. 202.

<sup>10</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, p. 202.

<sup>11</sup> It is important to note that while reformist humanitarianism seeks to mitigate the excesses of aggressive humanitarianism, the efforts of reformist humanitarisms also contain latent paternalism. For example, while reformist humanitarians spoke out against colonialism, their intent was not to question the colonial system itself but abuses inherent within. Instead, Crawford states that they ‘ultimately and unwittingly ... sparked reforms they had little idea would ultimately mortally weaken colonialism itself.’ Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, p. 202. In the current partnership discourse, while we will see that reformist humanitarianism has dominated the development discussions within the ecumenical movement for almost four decades, this does not negate the fact that Western paternalism still exists. As Maria Eriksson Baaz notes, ‘[what] is perceived by some as solidarity is experienced by others as hypocrisy.’ Maria Eriksson Baaz, *The Paternalism of Partnership: A Postcolonial Reading of Identity in Development Aid* (London: Zed

talk of humanitarianism was replaced by development; however, while terminology may have changed, both aggressive and reformist tendencies were still present. As Easterly notes, ‘the fondness for utopian solutions to the Rest’s problems is not new – it is a theme throughout the history of the West and the Rest. The Big Plans that would one day become foreign aid and military intervention appeared as early as the eighteenth century. ...The White Man’s Burden emerged from the West’s self-pleasing fantasy that “we” were the chosen ones to save the Rest.’<sup>12</sup> This history has had a profound impact on the partnership debate. On the one hand, many Global churches genuinely desired (and still desire) relationships of solidarity with Christians from other countries and cultures, seeking to re-form our relationships and understanding of the world. However, inherited and internalized issues of paternalism, arrogance, and cultural superiority complicate this process, making partnership difficult to attain.

A third theme is that of *authority*, especially in relation to *the control of finances*. The early missionaries built not only churches, but schools and hospitals as well. The maintenance and salaries involved in keeping this missionary machine going was obviously out of reach for the vast majority of World Christian communities, so, despite the protestations of Anderson, Venn, and others, these newly formed churches were made dependent of foreign funds at an early stage. As noted above, after World War II, Global churches got involved in development, with all the financial implications inherent in that process. While reviewing the historical narrative shows there has been much progress on these issues, the studies of the past two decades concerning the ‘ecumenical sharing of resources’ will show that many of the issues of authority, power, and control, especially as they involve finances, continue to create barriers to partnership.

Finally, a fourth issue involves the fact that many conferences, calls and resolutions for changed relationships were rarely followed up with actions, thus there was and is a dichotomy between *rhetoric and reality*. As one will see, throughout the historical narrative, promises were made by those from the Global churches pledging to change paternalistic attitudes and actions. However, for the most part these words have not, in any meaningful way, been lived out.

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Books, 2005), p. 95. For more on this issue, cf., Bill Cook and Uma Kothari (ed.) *Participation: The New Tyranny?* (London: Zed Books, 2001).

<sup>12</sup> William Easterly, *The White Man’s Burden: Why the West’s Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), pp. 22-23.



Now that the thesis and basic structure of this dissertation have been dealt with, three confessions need to be made. First, this dissertation is written from a Global Christian point of view and is aimed at a Global church audience; it could not be otherwise. It is true that I live and work in an African context, study under African professors, and the majority of my colleagues are African. This World Christian context, and especially the relationships that have been formed within it, obviously affect the way in which I understand partnership, and for that I will be forever grateful. That said, my basic understanding of the world, and especially of the church, is from a Global perspective. While admitting that there are also issues that present obstacles to mutuality and solidarity that the churches of World Christianity must work through, because of my background and the inherent and internalized paternalism that can still exist, I am not the one who can critique these. Therefore, this dissertation will focus and critique only those issues that seem to inhibit those of us from a Global Christian perspective from living out partnerships with our sisters and brothers in other lands.

Secondly, there are those who may say that by primarily focusing on the discussions and findings of ecumenical world gatherings, I am ignoring the fact that partnership is not something lived only, or even primarily, by missionaries and church leaders, but is also a lived reality within local churches and the lives of ‘ordinary’ Christians. Admittedly, a study such as this could be done in a number of ways. For instance, one could study how the history of partnership has been lived out in one particular denomination or tradition. One could also focus on the experience and practice of various churches in a given geographical location, such as the Eastern Cape of South Africa, and their overseas partners. That noted, I do believe that studying partnership as understood and debated by the world ecumenical movement has real value. As delegates gathered at these meetings, they represented all areas of the globe, as well as many different ecclesiastical traditions. What is recorded in the minutes and findings of these meetings were discussions revolving around what seemed to be the main issues pertaining to partnership experienced by all, and not just specific denominations, traditions, or locations. And while these deliberations were experienced at world conferences, the issues discussed were grounded in the lived reality of each participant’s experience, whether they were missionaries, ministers, or lay leaders. Each meeting, then, helps give us a ‘snap-shot’ of the evolution of the understanding, practice, and problems of partnerships, and for that reason the use of

the minutes and findings of world conferences can be of great value in a study such as this.

Thirdly, although I have sought to use inclusive language throughout this work, in quoting sources I have used the original language. In like manner, while in my own writing I have used American English, when quoting sources I have used the original spelling.

In conclusion, I hope that this dissertation can contribute to the ongoing discussions around partnership. As in all human relationships, the depth of understanding, caring and love between peoples can change over time. Many of the early missionaries went against the dominant world view in which they lived and, even with the cultural baggage they brought along, tried to see those at the receiving end of Christian mission as ‘brothers and sisters ... to whom they felt God was sending them.’<sup>13</sup> Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in its latent understanding, as well as post Whitby (1947) when partnership became a pronounced goal, there have been those from both Global and World Christianity who have called on Christians to not only use the rhetoric of partnership, but to change the structures and practices of mission to match. However, while mutuality and solidarity remain the goal, even today these have proven to be elusive. As Kirk notes, ‘[partnership] is a wonderful idea; pity the practice!’<sup>14</sup> Almost one hundred years after the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement at Edinburgh (1910), the need to study how partnership has been practiced and lived out is of vital importance as we seek to assess where we are today and how (if?) true partnership can be possible.

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<sup>13</sup> David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1991) p. 286.

<sup>14</sup> Andrew Kirk, *What is Mission?* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000) , p. 191.

## Chapter 2 A New Paradigm Emerges

The earliest days of the Protestant missionary movement took place during a time of great change in the world, both secular and religious. In the Western world old ways of thinking began to pass away; new paradigms began to emerge. And as we will see, at the very beginning of the modern missionary movement the four key themes outlined in the Introduction as obstacles to living out relationships of mutuality and partnership today, namely the *home base*, *humanitarianism and development*, *authority*, and the difference between *rhetoric and reality*, were already becoming clearly identifiable.

### 2.1 The Age of the Enlightenment

During the Reformation, while great changes within Christianity took place, there was little change in how the church related to the secular world. As Bosch notes, '[since] the time of Constantine there was a symbiotic relationship between church and state .... Even where the pope and emperor were at loggerheads, they both continued to operate within the framework of interdependence and of the Christian faith – in other words, within the framework of “Christendom” or the *corpus Christianum*.’<sup>1</sup> And although the Reformation served to divide the Western church, this belief of interdependence did not change; the idea of Christendom remained. During these years, while there were some stirrings of a missionary spirit<sup>2</sup>, there were overall very few efforts to reach out to those living in ‘pagan’ lands. Some contend that responsibility for this lack of missionary zeal falls directly at the feet of the Reformers themselves. William R. Hogg is of the opinion that ‘[the] non-Roman

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<sup>1</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> The Anabaptists are an example of those that reached out into territories other than their own. There are other examples of individuals and groups that exhibited a sensitivity to reach out beyond borders, such as the Pietists associated with the University of Halle as well as the Moravian Brethren who settled on the estate of Count Zinzendorf and established a village called Herrnhut. Zinzendorf was a precursor of Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn in his views about evangelization, culture, and ‘native agency’. He wrote that ‘[it] would be much better if there were men of their own nation among the Hottentots and other heathen, who could take care of their own people; for, as soon as we send people there, the heathen remain for ever subject to the Europeans.’ Quoted in William Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 26. For more information on the Anabaptist and Pietist movements, cf., Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, pp.195-196; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, pp. 245-255; William Richey Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations: A History of the International Missionary Council* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1952), pp. 1-3; and Martin Schmidt, ‘Ecumenical Activity on the Continent of Europe in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries’ in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948*, Vol. 1 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), pp. 99-105.

branch of Western Christianity developed its missionary spirit slowly. The Protestant reformers, among them Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, and Calvin, disavowed any obligation for Christians to carry the gospel beyond their fellow-countrymen.’<sup>3</sup>

Others disagree with this notion and contend that the Reformers did, in fact, understand the importance of mission and, as best they could given their historical circumstances, seek to be advocates for mission.<sup>4</sup> Whatever one thinks about the Reformers and their stand on mission, Bevans and Schroeder list three reasons why mission, on a widespread basis, did not take place during and immediately after the Reformation:

While accepting the fact that the theological foundations for mission were there, very little missionary activity occurred during the first two hundred years of Protestantism for a number of reasons. First of all, most of the energy and focus was on mere survival and reforming the church, which involved defending themselves and developing their own identity and doctrine. Second, the countries in which the churches of the Reformation were situated were not initially in much contact with non-Christian peoples. Third, it would take time to develop their own models of mission to replace those of monasticism and religious orders, which they rejected.<sup>5</sup>

As the seventeenth century drew to a close, there were forces at work in Europe that would have far reaching consequences, both for the European nation-states themselves, as well as for the rest of the world. Until this time, it was generally agreed that ‘[whether] in philosophy, grammar, rhetoric, or astronomy, it was impossible to put anything forward that was not somehow associated with the views of the most celebrated predecessors.’<sup>6</sup> The attitude, shared by most at the time, was that the ‘irreversible decline of the world made it necessary to refer back to the model of the Ancients, who had lived in happier times.’<sup>7</sup> This culture of ‘referring back’ continued during the time of the Renaissance, where the ‘rediscovery of Antiquity is mainly a question of copying unsurpassable models such as Homer, Aeschylus or Virgil.’<sup>8</sup> By constantly looking back at history for direction, European society remained conservative and change came very slowly. Bosch paints a picture of pre-

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<sup>3</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> Cf., Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 195; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, pp. 243-252; Schmidt, ‘Ecumenical Activity on the Continent of Europe in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries’, p. 84; Norman E. Thomas, (ed.) *Classic Texts in Mission And World Christianity* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 2005), pp. 32-49.

<sup>5</sup> Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 195.

<sup>6</sup> Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development* (London: Zed Books, 1997), p. 35.

<sup>7</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 35.

<sup>8</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p.35.

modern times as having a fixed order, with God over the Church; the Church over temporal leaders such as kings, lords, and nobles; temporal leaders over people; and people over animals, plants and objects. As Bosch explains, '[one] was not to tamper with this structure. Within the divinely constituted order of things, individual human beings as well as communities had to keep their proper places in relation to God, the church, and royalty. God willed serfs to be serfs, and lords to be lords.'<sup>9</sup> During the seventeenth century, however, 'possibilities in knowledge began to be debated .... Descartes, for instance, criticized the superiority of the Ancients: "It is we ... who should be called Ancient. The world is older now than before, and we have greater experience of things".'<sup>10</sup> Along with Descartes, many other philosophers, scientists, and artists contributed to the changing world view including Nicholas Copernicus, Francis Bacon, and Galileo Galilei. Over time, as each of these and others gradually influenced European thinking and worldviews, the idea of the advance of civilization came to be accepted, and '[thus], from the end of the seventeenth century, *what had previously been unthinkable became quite reasonable*: the intellectual landscape suddenly shifted, and the ideology of progress acquired a dominant position.'<sup>11</sup> The era of the Enlightenment and modernity had begun.

While many during this time (as well as many today) see the Enlightenment worldview as a direct threat to Christianity, the idea of 'partnership' and the fact that in today's world there are many independent and autonomous denominations in formerly colonized countries is a direct result of the Enlightenment and the dramatic changes that took place:

In spite of the fact that missionary circles in the West, on the whole, reacted rather negatively to the Enlightenment, there can be no doubt that this movement unleashed an enormous amount of Christian energy which was, in part, channeled into overseas missionary efforts. More than in any preceding period Christians of this era believed that the future of the world and of God's cause depended on *them*. The Enlightenment orientation ... was decidedly forward and optimistic. Under its influence, the churches tended to view God as benevolent Creator, humans as intrinsically capable of moral improvement, and the kingdom of God as the crown of the steady progression of Christianity.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 263.

<sup>10</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p.35.

<sup>11</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 35.

<sup>12</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 334.

This is not to say that an Enlightenment worldview led directly to transformed relationships between Europeans and others, for these new ideas were entering a world where colonization had existed for centuries, and was, by and large, still unquestioned. As Crawford notes, '[colonialism] – the political control, physical occupation, and domination by one group of people over another people and their land for purposes of extraction and settlement to benefit the occupiers – was considered “normal” practice until the early twentieth century.’<sup>13</sup> When looking at those outside of the Western world, what was ‘decidedly optimistic’ was that now, instead of peoples being forever rooted in their backwardness, they at least had the potential to be ‘like us’. Until others reached that potential, ‘...the ethical prescriptions implied by Enlightenment values applied to some kinds of subjects but not to others.’<sup>14</sup>

Because of this, while the Enlightenment opened doors to new relationships between individuals, new advances in science and technology, and new freedoms of thought and expression, there was also a darker, more perverse side to how these changes played themselves out in the missionary movement over the next century and a half. For example, before the technological advances made during the Enlightenment, the inability to travel easily made large scale overseas missionary work impossible. However, with new discoveries in the areas of navigation, as well as medicine, ‘the possibilities to enter and to occupy foreign countries (and to stay alive there!) were greatly enlarged.’<sup>15</sup> As missionaries from the Global churches entered these foreign lands, many of which had been colonized, ‘[the] shocking realization that so many in the *oikoumene* knew nothing of salvation through Jesus Christ, that so many had been suffering brutal exploitation by countries in the north, that so many lacked true freedom, or protection against evil forces, brought Christians together in order to proclaim, to repair, to protect and to develop.’<sup>16</sup>

However, there was more often than not a nascent paternalism present in the assistance offered: ‘[The] “noble savage” of Rousseau was a charming child, a *tabula rasa*, unspoiled by civilization and as yet innocent and unable to perpetrate evil. Small wonder then that this ostensibly optimistic view of humans was never far

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<sup>13</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, p.131.

<sup>14</sup> Roxanne Lynn Doty, *Imperial Encounters: The Politics of Representation in North-South Relations* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p.42; quoted in Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, p. 131.

<sup>15</sup> Jan van Butselaar, ‘Thinking Locally, Acting Globally: The Ecumenical Movement in the New Era’ in *International Review of Mission* 81 (July 1992), p. 363.

<sup>16</sup> Butselaar, ‘Thinking Locally, Acting Globally: The Ecumenical Movement in the New Era’, p. 363.

removed from its corollary, namely, a condescending attitude towards those “innocents”.<sup>17</sup> This subtle shift, from being ‘brothers and sisters’ to divinely appointed parents, is a common theme throughout the literature for this time period. For while

[the] philosophers of the Enlightenment considered all peoples to be ‘indefinitely perfectible’, ... in geographical terms, ... reason and the freedom from nature that it brought had reached their highest, most developed forms in Europe.... An Enlightenment map of the world saw global space divided between a center of reason, knowledge, and wisdom in Western Europe and a periphery of ignorance, barbarity, and only potential reason everywhere else.<sup>18</sup>

While an Enlightenment worldview did open space for changes in the nature of North/South relations, this dichotomy would govern the nature of these relationships. It would not be until much later, with the emergence of a post-colonial conscience, that issues of partnership and mutuality could be honestly and openly contested.

## 2.2 The Formation of Mission Societies

Once the Enlightenment had broken the shackles on the minds of many in the Western world, there was no going back. This had a profound impact on the churches in both Europe and America:

Christian vitality in eighteenth-century Europe and Britain lay at low ebb. The rationalism of the Enlightenment proved a destructive acid to Protestantism.... In England, the church was attacked by deists, the clergy in general were inadequate for their calling, and Hogarth’s ‘Gin Lane’ graphically depicted the depths to which morality had sunk. Yet some continued to pray for a revival of earth-quaking power.<sup>19</sup>

The prayed-for revivals came, and ‘three particular events sparked the nineteenth-century missionary renewal within Protestantism.’<sup>20</sup>

The first of these great revivals took place between 1726 and 1760 and is known as the Great Awakening. While it began in New Jersey, through the teaching and preaching of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), the Great Awakening spread and

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<sup>17</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, pp. 288-289. Consequently, the use of words such as ‘native’, ‘native pastor’, and ‘native church’ will be seen throughout the historical narrative from this point until the end of World War II. Although refraining from using such terms in my own writing, I have quoted sources directly so as to accurately reflect the prevailing worldview of each speaker or conference.

<sup>18</sup> Richard Peet and Elaine Hartwick, *Theories of Development* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1999), p.125.

<sup>19</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p.4.

<sup>20</sup> Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 209.

influenced many communities along the Atlantic seaboard.<sup>21</sup> Edwards preached ‘a gospel of repentance and faith, not of inducing people to do good works. Rather than whipping up the wills of their listeners by admonitions, threats, and promises, the preachers of the Awakening guided them toward cleansing the fountains of life through an encounter with the living and present Lord.’<sup>22</sup> In true Enlightenment fashion, Edwards looked forward to the progress of God’s kingdom and a world that increasingly moved from barbarism and paganism towards civilization and Christianity: ‘Though Edwards’s various millennial expressions were not always consistent, during the halcyon days of the Great Awakening he placed himself on record as expecting a glorious career for humanity before Christ’s return.’<sup>23</sup> In a pamphlet entitled *An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God’s People in Extraordinary Prayer* (1748), Edwards writes:

It is evident from scripture, that there is *yet remaining* a great *advancement* of the interest of *religion* and the *kingdom of God* in this world, by an *abundant outpouring of the Spirit of God*.... Before this, the Spirit of God is given but very sparingly, and but a few are saved; but *then* it will be far otherwise; wickedness shall be rare then, as virtue and piety had been before: and undoubtedly, by far the greatest number of them that ever receive the benefits of Christ’s redemption, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, will receive it in that time.<sup>24</sup>

Edwards was certain that the beginning of the millennium was fast approaching and that Christians should do all in their power to reach out with the gospel and improve the lot of others. This emphasis on the continuous improvement of the world affected missionary thinking and practice, stressing that spreading the gospel should include efforts of humanitarianism. Under the influence of the Great Awakening, Edwards and others, especially John Eliot (1604-1690) and David Brainerd (1718-1747), while not being involved in overseas mission, reached out to American Indians, which serves as a reminder that ‘... a century and a half of American missionary activity preceded the more conventionally accepted “beginning” of the Protestant missionary movement.’<sup>25</sup>

Another significant revival took place about the same time as the Great Awakening, but in another part of America. In 1735 two brothers, John (1703-1791)

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<sup>21</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 277.

<sup>22</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 278.

<sup>23</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 40.

<sup>24</sup> In Thomas (ed.), *Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity*, p. 53.

<sup>25</sup> Timothy Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 11.



and Charles (1707-1788) Wesley, came to Georgia under the auspices of the SPG (Society for the Propagation of the Gospel). The brothers were sent to the British colony to care for settlers, but also ‘reached out to the Choctaws, Chickasaws, African Americans and Jews.’<sup>26</sup> During their time in America, the Wesleys’ were greatly affected by contact with Moravian missionaries. In 1738, the brothers returned to Europe, and John Wesley ‘visited Zinzendorf at Herrnhut ... and later sought spiritual guidance from a Moravian bishop in London.’<sup>27</sup> Out of these experiences, the brothers, along with George Whitfield, began to preach revival services back in Britain, and over time what became known as Methodism emerged. One important aspect of this new movement was to have later implications on mission thinking and practice: ‘More clearly than the Great Awakening in the American colonies Methodism revealed the influence of the Enlightenment. Methodists could see no real difference between nominal Christians and pagans and could not, by implication, distinguish between “home” and “foreign” missions. The *corpus Christianum* was breaking up. The whole world was a mission field.’<sup>28</sup> Although it would be many years in coming, one can see this view expressed by Henry Newbigin in *One Body, One Gospel, One World* (1958) when he states that ‘the home base is everywhere.’<sup>29</sup>

The third revival, referred to as the Evangelical Revival in England and the Second Great Awakening in America, took place between 1787 and 1825. In England, this movement was strongly influenced by the lives and work of John and Charles Wesley: ‘[The] Methodist revival had a major impact in ushering in the Evangelical Revival, accompanied with tremendous missionary vigor and dedication, particularly among Anglicans and Presbyterians in England.’<sup>30</sup> In America, ‘the Great Awakening had more or less run out of steam. The churches of the religious establishment reached their nadir in the revolutionary generation. At the time of independence (1776) only about five percent of the population of the new nation were church members.’<sup>31</sup> However, after the American Revolution the churches began to grow at an unprecedented rate:

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<sup>26</sup> Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 209.

<sup>27</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 278.

<sup>29</sup> Leslie Newbigin, *One Body, One Gospel, One World* (New York: International Missionary Council, 1958), p. 27.

<sup>30</sup> Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 210.

<sup>31</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p.279.

The dramatic rise after 1776 is to be attributed almost solely to the Second Great Awakening. It was, unlike the first Awakening, not a new beginning for North America (as it was, to an extent, for Britain); rather it could profit substantially from the first Awakening, refer back to it, learn from its failures and shortcomings, consolidate its gains, and channel the unprecedented effusion of newly released energy into a great variety of ministries, particularly domestic and foreign missions.<sup>32</sup>

These revivals, along with the strong concomitant belief that the world was progressing ever closer to a time of God's reign, led many to see the need for organizing structures for the purpose of world mission. Unfortunately, it was difficult to find these in the established churches, so those who felt this impulse had to find ways to accomplish this task outside of the traditional church structures:

[Evangelicals] – whether in the United States, Britain, or the continent, and whether Anglicans, Lutherans, or members of non-established churches – were nonconformists in the true sense of the word. The 'official' churches were, by and large, indifferent; they showed little interest in the predicament of the poor in their own countries or the detrimental effect of colonial policies on the inhabitants of Europe's overseas colonies.<sup>33</sup>

In light of the 'official' church's indifference, 'one of the most significant developments to emerge out of this dynamic renewal movement was the founding of societies that were devoted explicitly to foreign mission. The key characteristic of this phenomenon was *voluntarism*.'<sup>34</sup>

The person who is considered by many to be the first modern missionary, as well as the founder of the first modern missionary society, is William Carey (1761-1834).<sup>35</sup> Carey, who was originally an Anglican but later became Baptist, was influenced by the voyages of James Cook in the Pacific, as well as the writings of Jonathan Edwards.<sup>36</sup> It is worth noting that the voyages of Cook had no missionary intent, but instead were completely secular in nature. Nonetheless, the reports had great effect on missionary impulses, for '[many] believed that, through the explorations of Cook and others ... God in his providence was opening a way for missions....'<sup>37</sup> As Hogg writes:

In William Carey the genius of the Evangelical Awakening and the inspiration of Captain Cook's *Voyages* came together like two carbon rods. When that

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<sup>32</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 279.

<sup>33</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 281.

<sup>34</sup> Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 211.

<sup>35</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 8.

<sup>36</sup> Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 211.

<sup>37</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 280.

humble shoemaker opened his heart and mind wholly to the power of God, the resulting arc was of such brilliance that it lighted the way for thousands who came after him, believing that God's will for them was 'to make disciples of all men'.<sup>38</sup>

In 1792, the Baptist Missionary Society was formed. Appropriately, the first missionaries sent out by the BMS were Moravians; however in April 1793, two of the societies' own, Carey and John Thomas, a physician, sailed for India. And while the Baptist Missionary Society was the first such society, others were to follow. Bosch notes that these societies 'first appeared on the scene haltingly, extremely apologetic about their existence and very uncertain about their nature and future. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, the situation had changed dramatically.'<sup>39</sup> By using the Baptist Missionary Society as a model, an explosion of missionary societies came into being.<sup>40</sup>

The significance and influence of Enlightenment thinking in these new 'voluntary' societies is clear. Before the Reformation and for one hundred years after, each church within Protestantism maintained tight control over their clergy and members, making even the consideration of such societies unthinkable.<sup>41</sup> However, as modern views took hold, '[the] Reformation principle of the right of private judgment in interpreting scripture was rekindled. An extension of this was that like-minded individuals could band together in order to promote a common cause. A plethora of new societies was the result.'<sup>42</sup> Later, in the discussion of Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn, one can begin to see the desire to extend this 'right of private judgment' to non-Europeans for the first time.

These societies were also thoroughly modern in their world view, as well as in how they were run and maintained:

There was something businesslike, something distinctly modern, about the launching of the new societies.... Carey took his analogy neither from Scripture nor from theological tradition, but from the contemporary

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<sup>38</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 6.

<sup>39</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 327.

<sup>40</sup> Mission societies formed during this time include '[the] London Missionary Society (LMS) in 1795, the Scottish Missionary Society in 1796, the Netherlands Missionary Society in 1797, the Church Mission Society in 1799, the British and Foreign Mission Society in 1804, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) in 1810, the American Baptist Foreign Missions Society in 1814, the Basel Mission in 1816, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in 1817-1818, the Danish Missionary Society in 1821, the Berlin Missionary Society in 1824, the Rhenish Missionary Society in 1828, the Swedish Missionary Society in 1835 and the North German Missionary Society in 1836 ....' Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 212.

<sup>41</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 328.

<sup>42</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 328.

commercial world – the organization of an overseas trading company, which carefully studied all the relevant information, selected its stock, ships, and crew, and was willing to brave dangerous seas and unfriendly climates in order to achieve its goal.<sup>43</sup>

These societies were also, for the most part, open to those of different Christian traditions. As Bosch notes, '[the] new societies, even those which were consciously denominational, such as Carey's Baptist Mission Society and the (Anglican) Church Mission Society (CMS), had nothing exclusivist or confessionalist about them. The CMS, for instance, experienced no difficulty in recognizing the validity of the office of missionaries not ordained in an Episcopal church.'<sup>44</sup> Some societies produced printed magazines and pamphlets on missions. The *Missionary Herald* (ABCFM) 'typically published articles on a wide range of theological and practical issues facing the church. Occasionally, the editor reprinted articles from other mission journals.'<sup>45</sup> The *Missionary Register* (CMS), edited by Josiah Pratt, secretary of the CMS from 1802-1824, 'promoted a comprehensive view of missions. His annual worldwide surveys kept before readers the spread of the Christian faith around the globe regardless of denomination or nationality.'<sup>46</sup> Through this type of interaction, as well as the relationships fostered on the missionary field, this early period was marked by 'openness toward other societies and a free exchange of ideas within the missionary world.'<sup>47</sup> And because these journals were widely read by laypeople and clergy alike,

[the] magazines helped to form opinion, they developed images and mental pictures, they built up attitudes. ...The average reader of the *Missionary Register* or the other missionary magazines knew exactly what he thought the British government should do about the temple tax in Bengal, or about the *sati* of Hindu widows, or the opium trade, or slave running. And a mass

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<sup>43</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 330.

<sup>44</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 330.

<sup>45</sup> Wilbert R. Shenk, 'Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?' in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 5 No. 4 (October 1981), p. 168.

<sup>46</sup> Shenk, 'Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?', p. 168.

<sup>47</sup> Shenk, 'Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?', p. 168. These feelings of openness and ecumenicism had changed by the mid-nineteenth century, and a shift can be seen towards greater emphasis on denominationalism. When reviewing the work and theories of Anderson and Venn, it should be remembered that the bulk of their work as secretaries of their respective societies took place during this time of denominationalism. Seen in this light, it makes the respect they had for one another and their openness to dialogue even more impressive. For more on the change from an early spirit of ecumenicism to a later stage of denominationalism, cf., Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, pp. 214-218; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, pp. 331-332; Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 95.

readership was produced, a readership concerned and informed about the world outside their own country as perhaps no other group in the nation.<sup>48</sup>

From the beginning and through the middle of the nineteenth century, mainline Protestant evangelicals were thoroughly and completely driven by a passion for evangelism. This time was also known as the Age of Humanitarianism, which greatly affected how missionaries saw their calling and task: ‘Humanitarians viewed the process of social transformation as conversion. They emphasized the importance of tapping the potential within an individual or a people. Such transformation had to be based on a voluntary, willed response from those being assisted.’<sup>49</sup> However, as mentioned earlier, colonialism at this point was still, by and large, unquestioned, and paternalism and feelings of cultural superiority were rife within the Protestant missionary movement, and indeed, within Global Christianity generally: ‘Christians did not, on the whole, have any doubt concerning the superiority of their own faith over all others. It was therefore, perhaps, to be expected that their feelings of *religious* superiority would spawn beliefs about *cultural* superiority. In itself this is no new phenomenon. The ancient Greeks called other nations *barbaroi*. Romans and members of other great “civilizations” likewise looked down upon others.’<sup>50</sup> However, because of the effects of the Enlightenment, and especially the technological advances that had been made, the West had advantages that no previous society enjoyed in pressing their dominance over others. Previously, ‘the relationship of dominance was, at least in theory, reversible; the vanquished could, at a given moment, revolt and overpower their former masters, if not militarily, then at least culturally.’<sup>51</sup> All this changed when

[the] Enlightenment ... together with the scientific and technological advances that followed in its wake, put the West at an unparalleled advantage over the rest of the world. Suddenly a limited number of nations had at their disposal ‘tools’ of know-how vastly superior to those of others. The West could thus establish itself as master of all others in virtually every field. It was only logical that this feeling of superiority would also rub off on the ‘religion of the West’, Christianity. As a matter of fact, in most cases there was no attempt to distinguish between religious and cultural supremacy – what applied to one, applied equally axiomatically to the other.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1996), p. 252.

<sup>49</sup> Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesman*, p. 106.

<sup>50</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 291.

<sup>51</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 291.

<sup>52</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 291.

These two powerful currents, namely concern for the welfare and salvation of others on one hand, and the feelings of cultural superiority, whether conscious or unconscious, were often in tension and they affected missionary policy and practice throughout the nineteenth century. It is into this historical and cultural context that the missionary statesmen and theorist Rufus Anderson (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions) and Henry Venn (Church Missionary Society) arose to powerful and influential positions within their missionary societies.

### 2.3 Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn – The Need for ‘Native Agency’

When discussing the lives of Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn, one is struck by the fact that, though they were born and raised on different continents and did not meet one another until both of their careers were well advanced, their lives shared many similarities: Both were born in 1796; both lost their mothers at the age of seven; and both lost their fathers at seventeen. In each of their homes, a very strong Evangelical upbringing had profound influence on their sense of calling and the importance of world missions. However, for our purposes ‘...both men, from their positions as senior secretaries of the largest American and European missionaries societies respectively, exerted far-reaching influence on missionary theory and policy. Both are credited with formulating the classic “three-self” definition of the indigenous church: self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating.’<sup>53</sup> Even though they were from different ecclesiastical backgrounds (Anderson was a Congregationalist, while Venn was Anglican), ‘to a remarkable degree the judgments of both coincided on many subjects. Yet, although they were in touch through correspondence and had one memorable meeting, it would appear that they were essentially independent thinkers.’<sup>54</sup> When seeking to find the antecedents of partnership in a time of paternalism, the lives, theory, and teachings of these two men profoundly influenced missionary policy and practice.

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<sup>53</sup> Shenk, ‘Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?’ p. 168.

<sup>54</sup> Warren, *To Apply the Gospel*, p. 11. Anderson and Venn met in August, 1854, when Anderson and a colleague, A.C. Thompson, passed through London for several weeks on their way to the Middle East and South Asia. For more on this meeting, cf., Shenk, ‘Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?’, pp. 168-170.

## 2.4 Rufus Anderson (1796-1880)

Rufus Anderson was born into a Congregationalist family in North Yarmouth, Maine, ‘where the theological atmosphere was Hopkinsian.’<sup>55</sup> Anderson’s family was intimately involved with the church and mission from his earliest years. His father, a minister, was present at the founding of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) in 1810. In 1812, he ‘took his young son to the ordination service of the first band of missionaries at the Tabernacle in Salem...., and from that time forward the lad felt a strong sense of missionary vocation.’<sup>56</sup> After graduating from Bowdoin College (1818) and Andover Theological Seminary (1822), he offered himself as a missionary candidate. However, rather than going directly overseas, Anderson agreed to assist in the ABCFM home office. Before this year of service was over, he was asked to stay on permanently and ‘[in] 1826 he was ordained for secretarial service with the title of evangelist, one of the earliest ordinations for denominational service in America. Anderson’s entire ministry until retirement in 1866 was spent in the administration in the American Board....’<sup>57</sup>

In the early days of the ABCFM, the key word was ‘assimilation’, a concept which assumed that European culture would eventually supersede that of ‘less developed’, non-European cultures. This being the case, it was believed that missionaries must work to help those whose cultures were being supplanted to make the necessary adjustments, while at the same time seeking to mitigate any negative effects of the civilizing process. As Hutchison notes, ‘Westernization would be seen (often by native regimes as well as by the mission interests) as mandatory – the only alternative to stagnation. The problem, from a missionary perspective, would be to tame the Westernizing process and control its effects.’<sup>58</sup> However, in only a decade

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<sup>55</sup> R. Pierce Beaver, ‘Rufus Anderson: To Evangelize, Not Civilize’ in Gerald H. Anderson, Robert T. Coote, Norman A. Horner, and James M. Philips (eds), *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1994), p. 548. The term ‘Hopkinsian’ refers to the influence of Samuel Hopkins (1721-1803), a contemporary of Jonathan Edwards. Hopkins followed a form of Calvinism that came to be called ‘disinterested benevolence’. As opposed to Edward’s ‘sinners in the hands of an angry God’, Hopkins ‘tone [was] quite different, both more affirmative and more ebullient. The parties to the renewed covenant are of a God of yearning compassion and elect people, already blessed, who are bound to act out of a gratitude more than out of a need for repentance or expiation. ... Hopkins ... insisted that humans can do nothing to effect their own regeneration. But he went on to argue that they must therefore work and act benevolently without hope of salvation or reward.’ Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 49-51.

<sup>56</sup> R. Pierce Beaver, *To Advance the Gospel* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), p. 10.

<sup>57</sup> Beaver, ‘Rufus Anderson: To Evangelize, Not Civilize’, p. 548.

<sup>58</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 64.

or so, the experience of assimilation, especially in the case of American Indians, proved to be extremely difficult and expensive. The

sending out [of] farmers and ‘mechanicks’ (i.e. craftsmen) to teach and demonstrate the arts of white civilization had proved costly, troublesome, and not especially fruitful. Someone, perhaps the government, might continue to make such efforts, but they were not to be prescribed in the operating instructions of the missionaries. A few years’ experience had damaged even the more moderate expectations that tribes of contented Indians, under missionary tutelage, would turn to praying and farming like Anglo-Saxons, building white frame houses, and writing instruments of government rooted in the Magna Carta.<sup>59</sup>

Because of Anderson’s close proximity to the ABCFM from its inception, he had a unique view of what had taken place. He had seen both its ‘successes and failures at close range’<sup>60</sup>, and felt that he knew a way forward. For Anderson, the

difficulties in applying the Great Commission would be met by what can be called ... the Great Compromise. Between the extremes of complete aloofness from the expansionist process and permanent commitment to it, [he] proposed a stance resembling (not by accident) the mediating ideal later proclaimed when the United States acquired overseas colonies. One goes in, imposing values and making available (though, Anderson would say, not imposing) a model for the society. But one then gets out, for practical reasons but also because the model itself, influenced heavily by democratic and congregational ideologies, dictates that churches and peoples must be self-governing.<sup>61</sup>

That Anderson believed in a middle way between ‘complete aloofness from the expansionist process and permanent commitment to it’ is not to say that he doubted the ultimate victory of European culture over all others, nor did he think that this process was necessarily evil. Concerning the ongoing spread and benefits of Western civilization, Anderson wrote:

The tendency among Christian nations now, is more and more to the forming of international relations, which is a new and most hopeful feature. Life, thought, labor all have greatly increased value, because of the immense increase of faculties for the intercommunication of man with man. With our railroads, steamships, and telegraphic wires; with our electrotyping, and power-presses; our sciences, arts, and commerce; with neither Hun, Vandal, nor Moslem to set back the tide of civilization, who does not see that the time for blessing the whole earth with the gospel has come, and that this is the grand business of the churches in our day?<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 68.

<sup>60</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 78.

<sup>61</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 77.

<sup>62</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, pp. 17-18.



Anderson believed strongly, as also common in his day, that the great advances Western civilization was making around the world were due to the providence of God. When commenting on the expansion of the British Empire, Anderson writes that ‘we at once see that only the hand which moves the world could accomplish all of this.’<sup>63</sup> Also, when discussing the ease of travel to the subcontinent, he writes that ‘we owe all this, under God, to the providential fact, that England had gained an empire in India, and must needs preserve an unencumbered way to it.’<sup>64</sup> Anderson also felt that he was living in a new and different time, and that God’s calling on his generation was a new and fresh call to evangelize:

Our fathers of the last century had no such calls from nations beyond the limits of Christendom; and they had not, because those nations were then comparatively unknown, or else were unapproachable. But God has been pleased to lift the pall of death from off the heathen world; to bring it near; and to fill our eyes with the sight and our ears with the cry of their distress. He has leveled mountains and bridged oceans, which separate the benighted nations from us, and made for us a highway to every land. To us he says, ‘Go!’ – with an emphasis and a meaning such as this command never had to ministers and Christians in former ages.<sup>65</sup>

However, passages such as these notwithstanding, Anderson did not believe that civilizing was a legitimate goal of missions and did not want missionaries confusing any secondary vocations to their main goal; that of evangelizing and planting churches. This fundamental change ‘sounded a clarion call to move forward in a different direction, to a single spiritual mission of proclamation of the gospel so as to win souls, gather them into churches, and enlist them in the same mission.’<sup>66</sup>

For Anderson, mission was only legitimate if one’s theories and practice were based on a biblical understanding, and his basis was the life and teachings of Paul. Anderson’s believed once Paul established a church, he left that church to grow on its own, under its own leadership, and he lamented the fact that this understanding of mission had been lost for so long:

It appears to have been a settled point with him, that a church once fairly planted and organized, with a proper arrangement for the pastoral care, might be safely left to itself, under the supervising grace of God. This, as will readily be seen, is a point of vital importance in the missionary work. Had not the apostolic idea of self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating churches dropped out of the Christian mind so soon after the age of the apostles, not to

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<sup>63</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 3.

<sup>64</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 6.

<sup>65</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 28.

<sup>66</sup> Beaver, *To Advance the Gospel*, p. 14.

be fully regained until modern time, how very different had been the history of Christendom, and of the world!<sup>67</sup>

Anderson then applied the lessons learned from Paul's practice to his own day, which led him to a quite radical proposal when discussing the 'nature of a mission church':

It should be composed only of hopeful converts; and should have, as soon as possible, a native pastor, and of the same race who has been trained to take cheerfully the oversight of what will generally be a small, poor, ignorant people, and mingle with them familiarly and sympathetically. And by native pastor, I mean one recognized as having the pastoral authority of a local church, with the right to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.<sup>68</sup>

After establishing churches and training up local pastors, the missionaries were to leave the running of the church to the local people. Understanding the prevailing view of his day, he knew that there would be objections that the emerging World churches would not be ready for this responsibility; however he stated that the only way for a church to ever stand on its own was to be given responsibility for itself at an early stage:

As soon as the mission church has a native pastor, the responsibilities of self-government should be devolved upon it. Mistakes, perplexities, and sometimes scandals, there will be; but it is often thus that useful experience is gained, even in churches at home. ...[The] church should be self-propagating from the very first. Such churches, and only such, are the life, strength, and glory of missions. A foreign missionary should not be the pastor of a native church. His business is to plant churches, in well-chosen parts of the his field, committing them as soon as possible to the care of native pastors; himself sustaining a common relation to all, as their ecclesiastic father and adviser; having in some sense, like the apostle, the daily care of the churches.<sup>69</sup>

A significant aspect of Anderson's thought was the importance he placed on translating the scriptures into the vernacular, and he celebrated the many successes in this endeavor: 'In nothing have the Protestant churches been so agreed in the working of missions among the heathen, as the duty of giving them the Bible. This surely is obedience to Christ's command....'<sup>70</sup> Another important facet was his belief that local churches should be self-propagating from the very first so that, once mature, they could 'undertake their own part in the world mission and become sending

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<sup>67</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 49.

<sup>68</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, pp. 110-111.

<sup>69</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 112.

<sup>70</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 211.

churches also.’<sup>71</sup> His last point, that the missionaries could still be an ‘ecclesiastic father and adviser’, could be and would be problematic: ‘[Missionaries] who declined to be pastors for the flocks would instead become bishops for the native pastors. But such anomalies would be temporary and bearable because of ... the process of devolution. This last prescription was the simplest to state, if not to accomplish. It was, of course: Missionary, go home! or at the least: Missionary, move on!’<sup>72</sup> At the end of the day, because the missionary was to move on to other fields where Christianity had not been preached, once a church was established Anderson’s vision was that the ABCFM and its missionaries were to release control and power to the local Christians to run their own affairs.<sup>73</sup>

Anderson was not merely a theorist, but also emphasized practical application. However, one of the biggest hindrances to putting theory into practice was the missionaries themselves. Some of the stories relating to the success of emerging World church pastors were not due to the devolution of power by missionaries, but rather took place because missionaries were forced to leave a given location, mainly due to political circumstances. In *Foreign Missions: Their Relations and Claim*, Anderson recounts a story about missionaries from the London Missionary Society in Tahiti. The LMS had not trained any local pastors, but in 1848 the French took over the island and ordered the missionaries to leave. While the English thought that all the work they had done was for naught, leaders from the World churches filled the role that was left void. Anderson quotes Dr. Tidman, former Foreign Secretary of the LMS, who recalled what happened in a speech in 1860:

I must be permitted to say one word concerning the *native pastors* of Tahiti. Why did they become so? Just because our Europeans were sent adrift by French authority. They were thus called forth by the necessity of the situation. These native brethren were not ordained before; but as soon as they were called to the work in the providence of God, they proved quite equal to it. And after twenty years of French misrule, notwithstanding all the influences of Popery on the one hand, and of brandy and wine on the other, there were now living under the instruction and influence of these native pastors a greater number of church-members, than they had had aforetime.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Beaver, *To Advance the Gospel*, p. 23.

<sup>72</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 81.

<sup>73</sup> Rufus Anderson, ‘Control Over Missionaries and Mission Churches’ in R. Pierce Beaver (ed), *To Advance the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Rufus Anderson* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), pp. 143-144.

<sup>74</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 103.

Anderson's firm belief was that, whether by design or 'providence', the only way for local churches to grow was to have authority and power given to them at an early stage. As he put it, '[the] child will never stand and walk firmly, if always in leading strings.'<sup>75</sup>

Anderson also believed that if world mission was going to succeed, then the churches of the *home base* would have to support financially and pray for the missionaries. Unfortunately, Anderson stated that despite the clear call of God on the churches of Global Christianity, many congregants were not involved:

[It] is known that even in the best of [the] churches, nearly one fourth of the members really contribute nothing for sending the gospel to the heathen, and scarcely more than a fifth part give attendance at the monthly concert of prayer for the conversion of the world. It is believed, also, to be true of those churches, with few exceptions, that not more than one professedly Christian family in three or four takes, or even looks into the monthly journal, which contains a definite and intelligent account of the missions they are pledged to support.<sup>76</sup>

Although this level of interest and support by congregants was low, Anderson stated that this issue could be rectified with more education: 'I believe the interest which truly Christian people take in the missionary work, is equal to their correct knowledge of it. For we must charitably suppose, that the apparent insensibility of so many real Christians to the enlargement and glory of their Redeemer's kingdom on earth, is not because their hearts are really cold and dead ..., but because they know so little about it.'<sup>77</sup> Anderson was optimistic that, if proper teaching was done by the pastors of local churches concerning mission, '[the] stupendous changes already noticed as going forward in the heathen world and in Christendom, as the result of God's providence, should lead us to expect corresponding changes in what may be called the religious world, and especially the evangelical churches.'<sup>78</sup> Unfortunately for Anderson, as well as those involved in mission that followed him, as we shall see throughout this thesis, the lack of support from the *home base* would continue to be a problem, despite efforts made to educate church members about what God was doing in other lands.

Anderson was truly radical in his vision and methods. The idea of trusting the agency of converts to not only support and govern themselves, but to take the role of

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<sup>75</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 104.

<sup>76</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 171.

<sup>77</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 172.

<sup>78</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 173.

mission churches in their own cultures, was a fundamental shift in mission theory and practice from the ABCFM's previous policy of 'assimilation'. It should be understood, however, that Anderson's view was primarily pragmatic and not based on any appreciation of non-Western cultures. Despite Anderson's view that the role of the missionary is not to civilize, '[his] lifelong campaign against the imposition of Western culture and religious patterns, and in favor of independent native churches, bespoke no appreciable sympathy for foreign peoples or cultures....'<sup>79</sup> When expressing his views of the cultures of non-Western peoples, he writes that '[one] obvious and most important fact in modern missions to the heathen is, that they are prosecuted in the less civilized, and to a great extent uncivilized, portions of the world.... India is partially civilized, the rest are in a state of barbarism, and most of them, except as they have been affected by the gospel, are absolutely savage.'<sup>80</sup> When discussing heathen lands, Anderson differentiated between those who are wrong in their beliefs, and those who are completely void of belief:

[In] those heathen nations which make the greatest pretensions to learning, as in India, we find but little truth existing on any subject. Their history, chronology, geography, astronomy, their notions of matter and mind, and their views of creation and providence, religion and morals, are exceedingly destitute of truth. And yet it is not so much a *vacuity of mind* here that we have to contend with, as it is *plenitude of error* – the unrestrained accumulations and perversions of depraved intellect for three thousand years. But among the savage heathens, it is *vacuity* of mind, and not a *plenitude*, we have to operate upon. For, the savage has few ideas, sees only the objects just about him, perceives nothing of the relations of things, and occupies his thoughts only about his physical experiences and wants. He knows nothing of geography, astronomy, history, nothing of his own spiritual nature and destiny, and nothing of God.<sup>81</sup>

Given this view of culture, which was the prevailing view of most Westerners at the time, Anderson warned both missionaries, and especially those in Global Christian churches who supported them, not to put unrealistic expectations on the new converts to accept or adopt 'modern' civilization too quickly. In a real sense, albeit indirectly, he was trying to protect the agency of converts to find their own way forward and decide for themselves how this new religion would effect change in their culture:

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<sup>79</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 80.

<sup>80</sup> Rufus Anderson, 'Missionary Schools' in R. Pierce Beaver (ed), *To Advance the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Rufus Anderson* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), p. 155.

<sup>81</sup> Anderson, 'The Theory of Missions to the Heathen', p. 80.

The popular sentiment at home is believed to have required too much of the missions. A standard had been prescribed for their ultimate success, which renders their satisfactory termination quite impossible, or at best throws it into the far, uncertain future. The Christian religion has been identified, in the popular conception of it, with a general diffusion of education, industry, civil liberty, family government, and social order, and with the means of a respectable livelihood and a well-ordered community. Hence our idea of piety in native culture has generally involved the acquisition and possession, to a great extent, of these blessings; and our idea of the propagation of the gospel by means of missions is, to an equal extent, the creation among heathen tribes and nations of a state of society such as we enjoy. And for this vast intellectual, moral, social transformation we allow but a short time. We have expected the first generation of converts, even among savages, to come pretty fully into our fundamental ideas of morals, manners, political economy, social organization, justice, equity – although many of these are ideas which old Christian communities have been ages in acquiring.<sup>82</sup>

Anderson stressed that if people were going to be evangelized, and thus over time change their culture, it would not be by the power of the missionaries. Instead, one of his primary tenets as secretary of the ABCFM was his strong belief that it is the power of the Holy Spirit that enables people to respond to the gospel. His belief in the work of the Holy Spirit in peoples' lives also carried over into the Spirit's ability to change and mold culture: '[It] rested on an insistence that the Gospel, once implemented, can be relied upon to foster true religion, sound learning, and a complete Christian civilization – all in forms that will meet biblical standards and fulfill the needs of a given people.'<sup>83</sup> In so doing, Anderson defended the rights of a people to change at their own pace without being pushed by the expectations of Global Christianity.

Rufus Anderson went against the prevailing views of his time and stressed the need for a gospel without the attachments of Western culture: 'His thought ... reflected the shift ... to the only kind of "Christian civilization" that he believed could be genuine – the kind that grows entirely in and from a native soil. The Kingdom of God is a seed. The missionary is a planter. The missionary plants the seed. The missionary leaves. Yankee go home!'<sup>84</sup> Although his views on culture would not be acceptable today, Anderson was one of a very few of his era who showed any respect

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<sup>82</sup> Rufus Anderson, 'Development of the Missions' in R. Pierce Beaver (ed), *To Advance the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Rufus Anderson* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), p. 95.

<sup>83</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 80.

<sup>84</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 89.

for the agency of non-Western Christians. This legacy had a large impact on the later growth and maturation of what is today known as World Christianity:

Rufus Anderson provided the young church with a charter and a bill of rights for its existence, work, and liberty. In his insistence on its wholeness from the outset, the right and necessity of its being actually the Church of Christ from the very beginning, its commitment to evangelism, and its freedom to alter patterns introduced by missionaries, Anderson gave the young church the chance to be itself, that is, to be the universal Church of Christ manifest in a given locality in a particular cultural and social setting.<sup>85</sup>

As we will see in the next chapter, by the late nineteenth century colonialism was at its height and Anderson's theories and teachings were not followed by those that came after him: 'The next generation ... dealt with Anderson by generally not mentioning him.'<sup>86</sup> As Beaver notes, 'within ten years of [Anderson's] death Americans along with the British and continental European missionaries had caught the "colonial mind"..., and a new emphasis on denominationalism combined with that outlook to stimulate missionary paternalism and imperialism. There was a general tendency to make the younger churches into ecclesiastical colonial copies of the planting churches.'<sup>87</sup> Despite Anderson's emphasis on 'native agency', Global Christianity sought to replicate itself around the globe, and the idea of spreading civilization and Christianity only became stronger as the twentieth century approached.

### 2.5 Henry Venn (1796-1873)

Henry Venn was born into a family with a long history of ordained service to the Anglican church. His grandfather (1725-1797), after whom he was named, became an Evangelical in the mid-eighteenth century as a result of the Evangelical Awakening: 'In a movement that was torn between Whitefield and the Wesleys, Anglicans like Henry Venn took a mediating position. They affirmed the need for conversion, genuine piety, warm fellowship, and evangelism, but challenged Whitefield's and Wesley's readiness to flout traditional church polity. Although it was often questioned by his critics, Grandfather Venn remained committed to the Church of England.'<sup>88</sup> He was also the 'spiritual father of the Clapham Sect'<sup>89</sup>, a

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<sup>85</sup> Beaver, *To Advance the Gospel*, p. 35.

<sup>86</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 89.

<sup>87</sup> Beaver, *To Advance the Gospel*, p. 38.

<sup>88</sup> Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesmen*, p. 1.

group of highly educated and influential men who ‘organized an almost endless series of philanthropic and religious societies. They helped the poor, taught children to read, wrote and published literature, combated the slave trade, and sent missionaries to other lands.’<sup>90</sup> Henry Venn’s father, John (1759-1813), having grown up in this Evangelical home, was profoundly involved with the Clapham Sect as well. It was also during these years that voluntary mission societies began to appear. Although they could have supported the Baptist Missionary Society or London Missionary Society, the members of the Clapham Sect wanted a society specifically affiliated with the Anglican Church, and on April 12, 1799 the Church Missionary Society (CMS) was formed. Henry Venn’s father, John, presided over many of the meetings involved in and leading up to the formation of the CMS.<sup>91</sup> This home and background is ‘where Henry Venn was born and spent his first seventeen years. His father was the respected rector of a parish whose leading citizens were men of affairs – members of Parliament, bankers, lawyers.... They pioneered Christian philanthropy and created institutions for Christian missions and humanitarian services. It was no ordinary village and it was no ordinary movement.’<sup>92</sup>

While not dwelling on Venn’s childhood, one experience is worth noting. In 1799, the Clapham Sect had organized the Society for the Education of Africans. In 1805, twenty-five children from Sierra Leone were studying in Clapham, and Henry was able to form relationships with these children. Although many of these Africans died because of their inability to adapt to England’s climate, the relationships that Henry formed with these children would instill in him a lifelong love for Africa and Africans.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Wilbert R. Shenk, ‘Henry Venn’s Legacy’, *Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research* 1 (April 1977), p.16. The Clapham Sect consisted of ‘pious and powerful Evangelicals, many of whom were members of Parliament.... Though not a formally organized group, they made the village of Clapham on London’s outskirts the centre of Evangelism in the 1790s. Not all were Anglicans and not all were regular residents of Clapham. Approximately a dozen men comprised the group of which William Wilberforce, prominent antislave campaigner, was the best-known member. To accomplish their purpose [they] enlisted the cooperation of others who shared their Christian principles and vision. These Evangelical activist worked essentially on two fronts: the public and the church. They assumed that Great Britain was a Christian nation. Government and church together maintained the social order and preserved public morals. The Clapham Sect shared the prevailing view of the social order as a static class system. They saw themselves as trustees under God to use their favored social position and wealth in ameliorating the ills of society.’ Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesman*, p. 2.

<sup>90</sup> Shenk, ‘Henry Venn’s Legacy’, p. 16.

<sup>91</sup> Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesmen*, p. 2.

<sup>92</sup> Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesmen*, p. 2.

<sup>93</sup> Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesmen*, p. 4.



Venn entered Queen's College, Cambridge, in 1814, and completed a B.A degree in 1818. After presiding as pastor for two different parishes, during which time he served at various stages on the CMS Committee, he was selected to be the honorary clerical secretary of the CMS on April 13, 1846. Because of the wealth inherited from his late wife (they were married from 1829 until her death in 1840), 'Venn always carried the title honorary clerical secretary, despite the committee's urging that he receive the normal salary. He served as secretary for thirty-one years, declining to receive so much as reimbursement for travel cost for official deputation.'<sup>94</sup>

Unlike the ABCFM and the American situation, the CMS was closely tied to the colonial experiment. In the early days of the CMS, populist views made it difficult for missionaries to gain appointments to the British colonies: 'The fact that Christian spokespersons such as William Pitt, Edmund Burke, William Wilberforce, and William Carey voiced stringent criticisms of the policies of the overseas trading companies made missionaries even less acceptable in those territories.'<sup>95</sup> However, over time there was a shift in colonial policies, and the missionaries and societies were able to take a leading role in this change:

In 1813 Parliament opened the door for 'the instruction of useful knowledge, and religious and moral improvement' in India (and subsequently in other colonies). This was, in effect, the beginning of what later became known as 'benevolent colonialism', which meant that the colonial power consciously took responsibility for the welfare of the inhabitants of its colonies. It also meant that missionaries were henceforth allowed to operate more or less freely. At first the newly arrived missionaries ... tried to keep their distance from the colonial authorities.... In the course of the nineteenth century, however, the situation changed fundamentally; evangelicalism became a respected power in a state that tried to regain its religious aspect. In practice, this meant that evangelicals (and evangelical missionaries), as they got to be more respected, also became increasingly compromised to the colonial system.<sup>96</sup>

It was into this increasingly close relationship between government and religion that Venn sought to establish his theories on mission practice.

Venn, as Anderson, based his views on a biblical understanding; however, he did not believe that the Bible held any permanent rules on the practice of missions and only used scripture as a guide. While Venn believed that the theological precepts for

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<sup>94</sup> Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesmen*, p. 16.

<sup>95</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, pp. 306-307.

<sup>96</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 307.

mission were fixed, '[in] his search for missionary principles, he did not draw on biblical or theological insights as much as on contemporary experience. The theological base was nonnegotiable but the emerging principles were. ...He was constantly scanning the horizon to see whether there was a new insight breaking in on current missionary practice.'<sup>97</sup>

For his scriptural reference, he used the forming of the church at Antioch following the death of Stephen. Although Venn gained a number of insights from the event<sup>98</sup>, there are a couple of special importance when studying partnership. The first comes from the relationship that was established between the church at Jerusalem (the sending church) and at Antioch (the receiving church). For Venn, this link was vital for the growth and maturation of both churches:

A ... reason for the rapid growth of the Antioch church was its close relationship with the Jerusalem church. The stability and strength of the younger church was enhanced by its ties to the older one. This relationship was not without tensions. Nonetheless, the churches needed each other.... Within the established church a legal relationship bound the parent stem to each branch. The spirit of the mother church determined whether there would be real independence. If that spirit was moderate, wise, and evangelical, a natural identity of interests emerged between the parent church and the branches. The church would become a true commonwealth.<sup>99</sup>

Another insight from the church at Antioch was the importance of World Christian agency in expanding and growing the ministry:<sup>100</sup>

[The] Antioch church grew because it appointed a chief minister as overseer.... Missionaries could do the initial work of preaching and gathering converts best. Once this initial phase had been complete, the supervision of a bishop was of help. When the church had a native ministry and a second generation of Christians was added to the church, a resident bishop was essential.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Shenk, 'Henry Venn's Legacy', p. 18.

<sup>98</sup> For a fuller explanation of Venn's views on the New Testament church and how it related to the modern missionary movement, cf., Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesman*, pp. 27-29.

<sup>99</sup> Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesman*, p. 29.

<sup>100</sup> While both Anderson and Venn stress the importance of native ministry, one can notice a slight difference on the particulars of this point. Anderson felt that, while a church established by the ABCFM would initially follow the polity of the missionaries that established it, over time and as a native ministry took over the church was free to choose its own rules and polity. Venn stressed that, although the church is planted at the grassroots level and the Acts account does not give a definitive example on church polity, the final consummation of this process was the placement of a native bishop to oversee the indigenous churches. Although the end goal was much the same (a self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating church), one can see their particular backgrounds as a Congregationalist and an Anglican, respectively, in the particulars of how this was to be done. Cf., Beaver, *To Advance the Gospel*, p. 37.

<sup>101</sup> Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesman*, p. 29.

For Venn, mission involved two processes; first, the proclamation of the gospel and training of new converts, followed by the formation of World Christian churches.<sup>102</sup> While this process might seem straightforward, until this time mission had been facilitated by forming ‘stations’, where the missionaries not only evangelized, but also maintained pastoral oversight of their new converts:

The Missionary whose labours are blest to the gathering in of converts, naturally desires to keep his converts under his own charge, to minister to them as a Pastor, and to rule them as a native congregation. So the two branches have become blended together; hence also the principles necessary for the Evangelistic work, one of which is ‘taking nothing from the Gentiles’ have insensibly influenced the formation of the native Christian Church – as if the word had been ‘taking nothing from the Christians’.<sup>103</sup>

Venn saw this strategy of forming mission ‘stations’ as ‘evil’ on a number of fronts, because ‘all is dependent upon the Missionary: and all the agency is provided for at the cost of the Society. The evil incident to this system is threefold.<sup>104</sup> First, Venn believed that if missionaries were continually involved in pastoral and administrative duties then the most important work, evangelization, would be ignored. Second, if missionaries had continual oversight over World churches there would then be no incentive for these new Christians to exercise their own agency; thus, ‘though the converts may amount to thousands in number they are a powerless body. The principles of self-support, self-government, and self-extension are wanting – on which depends the breath of life in a Native Church.’<sup>105</sup> Finally, if mission stations continued to be under the direction and tutelage of missionaries, there would be no advance to the ‘regions beyond’ and therefore the extension of God’s church to all parts of the world would be stalled.<sup>106</sup>

To Venn, the only way to correct this mistaken strategy was, as soon as possible, to put the leadership of new converts into the hands of a trained indigenous leadership

capable of undertaking the pastoral charge of Native Christian flocks, under the general superintendence of the Missionaries.... [As] such a Native Ministry can be introduced, the Mission will become firmly rooted in the soil, and the resources of the Society will be set free for the ‘regions beyond’. This view of a Native ministry should be kept in sight from the first

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<sup>102</sup> Henry Venn, ‘The Organization of Native Churches’ in Warren, *To Apply the Gospel*, p. 66.

<sup>103</sup> Venn, ‘The Organization of Native Churches’, pp. 66-67.

<sup>104</sup> Venn, ‘The Organization of Native Churches’, p. 67.

<sup>105</sup> Venn, ‘The Organization of Native Churches’, p. 67.

<sup>106</sup> Venn, ‘The Organization of Native Churches’, p. 67.

commencement of a Native Church, otherwise the Missionary will insensibly become the Pastor, and the Native Teachers who may be trained up will be employed rather as Missionaries than as Native Pastors, and will, as agents of an European Society, imbibe European tastes and habits; instead of regarding themselves as ministers, or servants in the Lord of the Native population with which they are to be in every way identified.<sup>107</sup>

As part of training, Venn, like Anderson, believed firmly in the importance of vernacular scripture translation at an early stage. For Venn, 'this was important because all Christians need to be people of the Book if they are to be properly nurtured.'<sup>108</sup>

Venn saw the formation of World Christian congregations as a natural, grassroots, bottom-up progression. In his theory, there were three steps to be followed:

THE FIRST STEP in the Organization of the Native Church will be taken when any Company, or one or more neighboring Companies unitedly, shall be formed into a *congregation, having a Schoolmaster, or Native Teacher located amongst them, whose salary is paid out of the Native Church Fund....* That A SECOND STEP in the organization of the Native Church will be taken when one or more congregations are formed into a *Native Pastorate, under an ordained native, paid by the Native Church Fund....* That A THIRD STEP in the organization of the Native Church will be taken when a sufficient number of native Pastorates having been formed, a *District Conference* shall be established, consisting of Pastors and Lay Delegates from each of their congregations, and the European Missionaries of such Districts.... When any considerable District has been thus provided for by an organized Native Church, foreign agency will have no further place in the work, and that District will have been fully prepared for a native Episcopate.<sup>109</sup>

Over time, when all of these steps have been completed, the ultimate goal of mission would then be realized: mature self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating indigenous churches under the direction of trained local leadership. When this stage is reached, Venn believed that it was time for mission by foreigners to cease in that area and for the missionary to then move to unevangelized regions and start the process again. Venn famously called this process of devolution the 'Euthanasia of a Mission' and saw it as a time when 'the Missionary is surrounded by well-trained Native congregations under Native Pastors, when he gradually and wisely abridges his own labours, and relaxes his superintendence over the Pastors till they cease to be a

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<sup>107</sup> Henry Venn, 'The Establishment of a Native Church', p. 62.

<sup>108</sup> Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesman*, p. 30.

<sup>109</sup> Venn, 'The Organization of Native Churches', pp. 69-70.

Missionary field, and passes into Christian parishes under the constituted ecclesiastical authorities.<sup>110</sup> At this point, with the 'Euthanasia of a Mission' completed, a church would then continue the process of evangelizing the local people. Venn felt that '[if] the elementary principles of self-support, self-government and self-extension be thus sown with the seed of the Gospel, we may hope to see the healthy growth and expansion of the Native Church, when the Spirit is poured down from on high, as the flowers of a fertile field multiply under the showers and warmth of summer.'<sup>111</sup>

Although one can see that he firmly wanted to see the agency of World Christians developed and respected, Venn, like Anderson, did not question the superiority of Western culture over non-Western ones: 'Venn shared to the full the paternalism of his contemporaries.'<sup>112</sup> However, Warren also notes that 'of him it can surely be said that he was totally devoid of any kind of spiritual imperialism. A native church tied to a Western pattern would be from his point of view a tragedy. By all means allow the missionary to exercise control at the beginning; what Venn was never tired of insisting was that unless the foreigner made himself unnecessary he was frustrating the purpose of God.'<sup>113</sup>

Remembering the impact on his life of the relationships with African children during his childhood, Venn continued throughout his life to 'maintain a wide circle of friends among Africans and Asians and entertained them in his home when they came to London. These contacts had a definite influence on the development of Venn's policies.'<sup>114</sup> One well known example is quoted in Warren's *To Apply the Gospel*:

A native merchant from Sierra Leone was one day taking tea with Venn in his London home. The merchant had been telling of his travels when Venn interrupted, 'Now, if you can afford to spend money on travelling for your pleasure, why don't you contribute something to the support of your own clergy, instead of leaving it all to us in England?' The merchant replied: 'Mr. Venn, treat us like men, and we will behave like men; but so long as you treat us as children, we shall behave like children. Let us manage our own Church affairs, and we shall pay our own clergy.'...The merchant had put into a sentence what Venn was forever trying to get missionaries to understand.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Venn, 'The Establishment of a Native Church', p. 63.

<sup>111</sup> Venn, 'The Organization of Native Churches', p. 71.

<sup>112</sup> Warren, *To Apply the Gospel*, p. 26.

<sup>113</sup> Warren, *To Apply the Gospel*, p. 26. While it is clear that Venn was a great respecter and promoter of 'native agency', Warren is not entirely correct when stating that, for Venn, 'a native church tied to a Western pattern would be ... a tragedy.' While the 'Euthanasia of a Mission' was to happen at an early stage, the new converts were still to be tied to an Anglican, and thus Western, polity.

<sup>114</sup> Shenk, 'Henry Venn's Legacy', p. 19.

<sup>115</sup> Warren, *To Apply the Gospel*, pp. 26-27.

Although he struggled to get missionaries to apply his principles in their various contexts, one can point to a number of successes. First, Venn was able to shift the demographics of those serving the CMS towards a greater representation of those coming from traditionally ‘receiving’ countries: ‘In 1841, there were 107 European and 9 African and Asian missionaries in the CMS, while thirty-two years later, under Venn’s leadership, the CMS had 230 European and 148 African and Asian missionaries.’<sup>116</sup> Second, he made significant, albeit difficult, steps towards the establishment of native clergy, including the ordination of the first African Anglican bishop in 1864.<sup>117</sup>

Despite these successes, Venn faced many difficulties and obstacles. In his tenure as head of the CMS, he sought to ‘break down the racist barriers that were beginning to rise against non-Western peoples. He had always insisted that every people had the potential to achieve the same level of competence as Europeans – if given the opportunity.’<sup>118</sup> Another problem was how to accomplish the capacitating of World Christian agency through the agency of missionaries. If the missionaries were continually occupying places of authority and leadership over new congregations, then the process of these new churches rooting themselves in their own cultures, as well as taking on the responsibility of evangelizing their own communities, would continue to be problematic. He also struggled with missionaries who had difficulty giving over responsibility and authority to these new churches. While Venn could describe the processes involved in the ‘Euthanasia of a Mission’, the realization of this goal proved to be difficult. As one can see, his efforts were not always successful, and unfortunately, like Anderson, his ideals would be largely ignored by those that came after him during a time of heightened colonial expansion from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, by simply asking these questions and seeking to find answers, he opened a way for the growth of World

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<sup>116</sup> Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 214.

<sup>117</sup> Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesman*, p. 107. Samuel Adjai Crowther, a Yoruba, was consecrated on June 19, 1864. Although this event is significant, due to the protestations of European missionaries, Crowther was not allowed to serve his own people (which would have been in line with Venn’s mission strategy), but was sent to the Niger Mission where he was just as much of a foreigner as any European would have been. Cf., Andrew F. Walls, ‘Samuel Ajayi Crowther: 1807-1891’ in Anderson, Coote, Horner, and Phillips (eds), *Mission Legacies*, pp. 132-139; Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesman*, pp. 73-76, 106-116.

<sup>118</sup> Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesman*, pp. 108-109.

Christianity whose leaders and members would, in later years, find their own voice and demand greater respect and equality.

## 2.6 The Legacies of Anderson and Venn

When discussing these missionary statesmen and their contributions to laying the groundwork for what would later become ‘partnership’, it is easy for those of us in the twenty-first century to denounce much of what they said and wrote, especially regarding how the cultures of those on the receiving end of mission were seen: ‘They accepted the superiority of Western culture as self-evident.’<sup>119</sup> And while it is true that by today’s standards their views are, at best, arcane, we must also remember that they lived in their own particular historical context and milieu. As Bevans and Schroeder note, ‘[even] the great prophetic missionaries who challenged the prejudices and injustices of their time were restricted by those same “blindness” in other areas.... We are reminded that we are all children of our time and approach ... missionary practice within our own historical, cultural, and religious contexts.’<sup>120</sup>

Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson were the greatest missionary statesmen and theorists of their day. In Bosch’s view, their intentions ‘were noble. Great strides toward church independency were indeed made in this period, not least because they were putting greater trust in the integrity of their black and brown converts than most of their contemporaries did.’<sup>121</sup> Their views, especially on espousing the ‘agency’ of persons to run their own affairs, make decisions on church polity, and expand the church within their own culture, lasted far beyond their lifetimes: ‘[They] affirmed that all peoples are created equal, all worthy of respect, and can receive the grace of God. Failure to respect people robbed them of their dignity and self worth.’<sup>122</sup> As we will see in the next chapter, others like Roland Allen and John Nevius continued to stress the importance of ‘native agency’ to those involved in mission from the Global church. In the lands of World Christianity, the philosophy of Venn and Anderson and their belief in local agency and leadership development contributed to a growing feeling of ‘nationalism, political consciousness, and nation building.’<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Shenk, ‘Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?’ p. 171.

<sup>120</sup> Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, pp. 204-205.

<sup>121</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 332.

<sup>122</sup> Shenk, ‘Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?’ p. 171.

<sup>123</sup> Jehu J. Hanciles, ‘Missionaries and Revolutionaries: Elements of Transformation in the Emergence of Modern African Christianity’ in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 28 No. 4 (October, 2004), p. 150. Cf., Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, pp. 213-214.

Despite this important and lasting legacy, ‘...things did not turn out as expected, in part because their plans were often subverted by their own missionaries.’<sup>124</sup> Mission societies and missionaries continued to have an Enlightenment view of Western culture and morals as superior, and most continued to support colonization because of its perceived benefits to others. While everyone seemed to agree that the end goal was independent ‘native churches’, it also seemed to be unanimous among missionaries that the time for this independence was always in the future. When missionaries met together to discuss the ongoing work and the future of the missions, they showed ‘[concern] for the welfare of the younger churches: they should be self-governing and self-supporting. Yet independent status for these churches was always viewed as belonging to the future. When any enthusiast suggested devolution or missionary withdrawal as being shortly feasible, his voice was drowned out by a crescendoing chorus of caution. Missionary work was a long-time enterprise.’<sup>125</sup> When looking at the policies and practice of the ABCFM, Hutchison notes that ‘no policy was more redolent of good intentions, nor more likely to produce ingenious reasons why missionaries should stay just a little longer. In the absence of Anderson’s acute sense of the dangers of paternalism, even those who championed autonomy in principle found it inapt in the particular situations.’<sup>126</sup> One example of how missionaries reacted to these policies can be seen in the writings of Miron Winslow, an ABCFM missionary who directed a school in Madras. When discussing the handing over of the school to the Indian converts, he ‘argued that though one must trust the vessels of grace chosen by the Holy Spirit, some vessels – in this case the Euro-American ones – were likely to be more trustworthy than others.’<sup>127</sup>

Paradoxically, it is important to note that one of Venn and Anderson’s fundamental principles, the need for the vernacular translation of scripture, actually worked against this missionary intransigence. As Sanneh and others have noted, the act of translation had profound consequences for issues of ‘agency’ and the future of Global/World church relations:

Often the outcome of vernacular translation was that the missionary lost the position of being the expert. But the significance ... went beyond that.

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<sup>124</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 332.

<sup>125</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, pp.32-33.

<sup>126</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 97.

<sup>127</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 97.



Armed with a written vernacular Scripture, converts to Christianity invariably called into question the legitimacy of all schemes of foreign domination – cultural political, and religious. Here was an acute paradox: the vernacular Scriptures and the wider cultural and linguistic enterprise on which translation rested provided the means and occasion for arousing a sense of national pride, yet it was the missionaries – foreign agents – who were the creators of that entire process.<sup>128</sup>

Jenkins agrees, noting that ‘the simple decision to translate the scriptures into local languages was in itself a key concession to native cultures, and one made by even the most obtuse Northern missionaries. The mere act of translation proved that no single language was privileged as a vehicle of salvation.’<sup>129</sup> While many nineteenth century missionaries may have worked against the goals of increased ‘agency’ on the part of converts, much of their work in scripture translation paved the way for later contestation, both ecclesiastically and politically.

Another reason for the failure of their theories to have lasting impact was also, in part, due to the limitations of their own worldview and expectations. As already stated, Anderson and Venn were products of their time, and although they tried to push for World Christian agency and used the term ‘indigenization’, the way in which they used the term suggested not the planting of new churches rooted in local soil, but simply the spread of Global Christianity:

In borrowing the term ‘indigenous’ from the social scientist, missionary statesmen altered its meaning. Social scientists of the day used the term in its original sense of the culture native to a particular place and people with their own institutions and folkways. Both Anderson and Venn would have helped their cause along if they had insisted on respecting this definition. Instead, they redefined ‘indigenous church’ to be one in which indigenous peoples had become competent to lead an institution that met European standards.<sup>130</sup>

Finally, it must also be said that the ‘three-self’ formula also did not meet with the desired results because it was, according to Bosch, based on a Global Christian view of what constituted a mature, viable church:

These *notae ecclesiae* were derived from the Western idea of a living community, which was one which could support, extend, and manage itself; these, then, were the criteria according to which the younger churches were

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<sup>128</sup> Lamin Sanneh, ‘Christian Missions and the Western Guilt Complex’, *The Christian Century* 104 (April 8, 1987), p. 331. For more on this subject, cf: Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995); Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1989).

<sup>129</sup> Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 113.

<sup>130</sup> Shenk, ‘Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?’, p. 170.

judged. The Western churches, which had long ago achieved these aims, represented the ‘higher’ form, the others, struggling to rise to these expectation, the ‘lower’. [The] prevailing image was a *pedagogical* one – over an extended period of time and along a laborious route the younger churches were to be educated and trained in order to reach selfhood or ‘maturity’, measured in terms of the ‘three-selves’. In practice, however, the younger churches, like Peter Pan, never ‘grew up’, at least not in the eyes of the older ones.<sup>131</sup>

By the end of the nineteenth century, the world was entering an age of the height of colonial expansion by the European powers.<sup>132</sup> The notion of ‘civilizing’ and ‘Christianizing’, so much spoken against by both Venn and especially Anderson, became the dominant paradigm. In theory, Protestant missions aimed at the establishment of

‘independent’ younger churches. The pervasive attitude of benevolent paternalism, however, often militated against this declared goal. The enthusiastic discussions about ‘self-governing, self-expanding, and self-supporting churches’, so prominent around the middle of the nineteenth century were, for all practical purposes, shelved by the beginning of the twentieth. The younger churches had, almost unnoticed, been demoted from churches in their own right to mere ‘agents’ of the missionary societies.<sup>133</sup>

The independence that both Venn and Anderson had envisioned for these newly formed churches was still decades away. However, by emphasizing the importance of vernacular translation, as well as the establishment of ‘three-selves’ churches, their work proved important in providing crucial steps ‘towards the missionary goal of founding churches that would themselves become the means of missionary advance in the world.’<sup>134</sup>

## 2.7 Tracing the Four Themes

During these first years of the modern missionary movement, each of the four themes we are tracing was already present. First, because missionary societies were by their very nature voluntary, they were dependent for their support on the generosity of ordinary church members, the *home base*. Thus, as mission work expanded during

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<sup>131</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 450.

<sup>132</sup> While it is true that the United States ‘was not involved in this colonial expansion, ... Manifest destiny was a strong motivation on both sides of the Atlantic. It became almost impossible to separate and distinguish political and religious motivations.’ Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 214. For a fuller discussion on how the concept of ‘manifest destiny’ affected American missions, cf., Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, pp. 91-124.

<sup>133</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 295.

<sup>134</sup> Shenk, ‘Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?’, p. 171.

this era, the success or failure of a given mission society rested on its ability to acquire support and donations. As we have seen, Anderson lamented the small numbers of church members who actually contributed financially to mission. When attempting to reach those not involved in supporting mission, Anderson believed that the key to gaining more funding rest in educating Global Christians on their calling to participate in reaching out to areas and peoples who had never heard the gospel, as well as the Christian responsibility to alleviate human suffering. As a result, during this time missionary statesmen (and at this time they were all men) from Global Christian churches put great effort into keeping the *home base* informed and excited, for the very existence of mission depended on this.

The second theme of *humanitarianism and development* clearly has its roots in this period; in fact, the beginning and middle of the nineteenth century was known as the Age of Humanitarianism. As technological advances made travel easier and safer, Global Christians gained a new awareness of the conditions of exploitation, slavery, and poverty that millions living in Africa and Asia experienced on a daily basis. Because of the Enlightenment and the idea of progress, many Global Christians believed that social transformation was part of their Christian duty. However, they also subscribed to an Enlightenment view of the world which divided geographical space between those that were civilized and those which were uncivilized or, at most, partially civilized. So while Global Christians believed that they were reaching out in love to their brothers and sisters, this also involved an inherent paternalism as they sought to remake ‘the other’ in their image.

Third, during this period it became quickly apparent that the issue of *authority* would make Anderson and Venn’s goals of establishing ‘three-selves’ churches impossible to realize. Both of these missionary statesmen fully believed in the importance of ‘native agency’. The policies they promoted were meant to facilitate the devolution of power and, as Venn termed it, the ‘Euthanasia of a Mission’. However, while many, including their own missionaries, expressed sympathy for Anderson and Venn’s position, most had difficulty applying it to particular situations and therefore believed firmly that the time for devolution was always going to be in the future.

Lastly, an early example of the difference between *rhetoric and reality* can also be seen in the life and work of both Anderson and Venn. Again, despite Anderson and Venn’s stated goals promoting both ‘native agency’ and the

establishment of 'three-selves' churches, the intransigence of missionaries, as well as the limitations of their own world view, made the realization of these goals unattainable. Although the seeds for what will become World Christianity were being sown, in this early period the churches planted overseas was simply an extension of Global Christianity, which was, again, firmly under missionary control and supervision.

### Chapter 3

#### The Era of Trusteeship and Manifest Destiny

While the first decades of the Protestant missionary movement were characterized as an era of humanitarianism, as the last few decades of the nineteenth century approached there were major changes in how the West, especially Britain and the United States, related to and understood their place in the world. Britain entered what has been called the age of ‘high imperialism’ and greatly expanded the territories which it administered around the globe. And while the United States did not seek political control overseas, economic expansion and access to markets affected the way in which it related to other peoples. In addition to this expansionist mood, Darwin’s understanding of evolution and natural selection, which had previously applied to the physical world, was also applied to the world of human culture and history. The net effect was that the nascent paternalism seen so often early in the century became a full-blown system of classifying and ranking peoples based on race and culture.

Within the missionary community, there were also changes that effected how missionaries saw themselves and their relationship with those to whom they were sent. First, the new expansionist mood affected the policies of mission societies, so to a large extent the ‘three-selves’ theory of mission espoused by Anderson and Venn was rejected by those that followed them, if not outright, at least in practice. And second, while in the early days of the modern Protestant missionary movement most missionaries were from working class backgrounds, towards the end of the century, waves of university educated students were motivated to evangelism and overseas work. Thus they saw themselves, as well as those with whom they were called to work, very differently from their predecessors. All of these factors were to have major implications on mission theory and practice in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially with regards to how the members of the newly emerging churches of World Christianity were perceived and treated.

During this period, we will see that of the four themes, *humanitarianism/development*, and *authority* are the most pronounced, for as the ideals of Anderson and Venn were largely abandoned or ignored, most missionaries and their supporters had few qualms with exerting their agency and power over others. And due to this near unanimous support of empire building, the issues of the *home base* and *rhetoric*

and reality tend to be less visible as the vast majority of Global Christians fully imbibed the spirit of the age.

### 3.1 The Expansion of Empire and the 'Superior' Race

Both Britain and the United States sought to expand their power and influence towards the end of the nineteenth century and the first few years of the twentieth. Although this process was undertaken in different ways (Britain by the direct annexation of territory; the United States by expanding access to markets), the heart of the matter for both was economic. As Drohan notes,

[the] era of free trade ground to a halt in the 1870s, basically due to the surfeit of industrial goods on the market. As the struggle for markets intensified, tariff barriers were raised against foreign goods and external markets were secured by enclosure or the staking out of colonial territories by the dominant European powers. Within these enclosures, production of raw materials was organized and markets for industrial products developed.<sup>1</sup>

As stated above, European imperialism involved the direct rule of overseas territories. Possibly the most famous (and infamous) example of this can be seen in the Berlin Conference as the Western world met to divide control of the African continent:

The Berlin Conference on the Congo, which took place from November 15, 1884 till February 26, 1885 had an outcome not only in the partition of Africa but also in a precarious division of power in Europe. The *divide et impera* principle meant ... the physical, political, administrative and military control of the Western powers over the people of the rest of the world, in particular of Africa. The conference was attended by 14 states, including Turkey and the United States. It was a Conference about and without Africa.<sup>2</sup>

What was true for Africa was also true for much of the global South, and '[between] 1870 and 1900 the European states *added* 10 million square miles of territory and 150 million people to their areas of control, one-fifth of the earth's land surface and one-tenth of its people.'<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Drohan, 'Christianity, Culture and the Meaning of Mission' in *International Review of Mission* 75 (July 1986), p. 292.

<sup>2</sup> Frans J. Verstraelen, 'Hundred Years after the Berlin Conference 1884/85' in *Mission Studies* 2 (1984), p. 84.

<sup>3</sup> Peet and Hartwick, *Theories of Development*, p. 105. For a comprehensive history of European interest and expansion into Africa, cf., Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa* (London: Abacus, 1992).

When looking at British imperialism in particular, Bosch points out that this scramble to acquire territories was the logical outcome of British foreign policy as it had been practiced for decades:

[The] *British* colonial venture, which goes back to the early seventeenth century, started primarily for trading purposes. It is only in the course of time that imperialist motives began to enter into the picture. There is therefore some truth in J.R. Sealey's saying that the British Empire was acquired in fits of absentmindedness. The Napoleonic wars and Britain's gaining the naval ascendancy over the world seas certainly had something to do with this. And once started on this course, there was almost no way of stopping the process of acquiring ever more territories....<sup>4</sup>

At its apex, the British empire controlled one-fifth of the world's territory and one-quarter of its people; an empire on which 'the sun never sets'.<sup>5</sup>

The United States expanded its power in a more subtle, though no less powerful, way. The nineteenth century had seen the fulfillment of the American idea of 'manifest destiny' with the expansion of the United States from the Atlantic to the Pacific<sup>6</sup>: '[By] 1890, it was officially declared by the Bureau of the Census that the internal frontier was closed. The profit system, with its natural tendency for expansion, had already begun to look overseas.'<sup>7</sup> According to Zinn, this expansionism was not a new phenomenon:

Expansion overseas was not a new idea. Even before the war against Mexico carried the United States to the Pacific, the Monroe Doctrine looked southward into and beyond the Caribbean. Issued in 1823 when the countries of Latin America were winning independence from Spanish control, it made plain to European nations that the United States considered Latin America its sphere of influence. Not long after, some Americans began thinking into the Pacific: of Hawaii, Japan, and the great markets of China.... Thus, by the 1890s, there had been much experience in overseas probes and interventions. The ideology of expansion was widespread in the upper circles of military men, politicians, businessmen – and even some of the leaders of the farmers' movements who thought foreign markets could help them.<sup>8</sup>

In the end, what the United States needed was not territorial expansion<sup>9</sup> but the opportunity to buy, sell, and trade goods: 'American merchants did not need colonies

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<sup>4</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 306.

<sup>5</sup> Peet and Hartwick, *Theories of Development*, p. 105.

<sup>6</sup> The principle acquisitions of territory involved with this expansion were the Texas Annexation of 1845, the Mexican Cession of 1848, and the Oregon Treaty of 1848.

<sup>7</sup> Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2001), 297.

<sup>8</sup> Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*, pp. 297-298.

<sup>9</sup> While in general the United States did not expand territorially in the same way as European countries, it would not be correct to say that no territories were acquired. For example, 'the Spanish-American

or wars of conquest if they could just have free access to markets. This idea of an “open door” became the dominant theme of American foreign policy in the twentieth century. It was a more sophisticated approach to imperialism than the traditional empire-building of Europe.’<sup>10</sup> Verstraelen agrees when he notes the presence of the United States at the Berlin Conference: ‘Though the United States had no direct colonial ambition in the eastern hemisphere, it was economically interested. ... [The] USA secured unlimited freedom for trade in Leopold’s “territory”.’<sup>11</sup>

This new era of intense imperialistic activity was, unfortunately, accompanied by a new attitude towards race. Although racism obviously existed prior to this time, the development of evolutionary thought changed how those of Anglo Saxon heritage perceived non-Anglo Saxons. Charles Darwin’s (1809-1882) *The Origin of Species* first appeared in 1859. His evolutionary theories, while quite controversial, dealt exclusively with the natural world.<sup>12</sup> However, it was not long before others, such as Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), were applying evolutionary thought to societies and peoples.<sup>13</sup> According to Spencer, ‘societies had natural, functional characteristics like all living things. He argued, through analogy, that the biological principles of organic

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war did lead to a number of direct annexations by the United States. Puerto Rico ... was taken over by U.S. military forces. The Hawaiian Islands, one-third of the way across the Pacific, which had already been penetrated by American missionaries and pineapple plantation owners, ... was annexed by joint resolution of Congress in July of 1898. Around the same time, Wake Island, 2,300 miles west of Hawaii, on the route to Japan, was occupied. And Guam, the Spanish possession in the Pacific, almost all the way to the Philippines, was taken. In December 1898, the peace treaty was signed with Spain, officially turning over to the United States Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, for a payment of \$20 million.’ Zinn, *A People’s History of the United States*, p. 312. William Roger Louis agrees when he states that ‘the United States never described these colonial possessions as colonies but rather as “territories” because of the American revolution and anti-imperial heritage. The acquisition of colonies in all but name caused ideological embarrassment.’ William Roger Louis, ‘The European Colonial Empires’ in Michael Howard and William Roger Louis (eds.) *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 93.

<sup>10</sup> Zinn, *A People’s History of the United States*, p. 301.

<sup>11</sup> Verstraelen, ‘Hundred Years after the Berlin Conference 1884/85’, p. 84.

<sup>12</sup> Although his theories dealt with evolution in the natural world, this obviously had religious implications which are still ongoing today. From a religious, Judeo-Christian point of view, Schwarz says that to properly understand Darwin’s theories one must remember two points: ‘(1) Darwin’s theory of evolution was not a denial of religion but a scientific theory substantiated on scientific grounds and therefore to be refuted only on these grounds. (2) Darwin’s theory did not diminish God’s creative activity. If interpreted theistically it even enhanced our understanding of the magnitude of divine creations.’ Hans Schwarz, ‘The Significance of Evolutionary Thought for American Protestant Theology: Late Nineteenth-Century Resolutions and Twentieth-Century Problems’ in *Zygon* 3 (September 1981), p.263.

<sup>13</sup> Rist warns that ‘[this] social evolutionism should be carefully distinguished from the biological evolutionism associated with the work of Charles Darwin (who actually spoke of “natural selection” rather than “evolution”)’. Rist, *The History of Development*, p.42. Cf., Herbert Spencer, *Essays: Scientific, Political, and Speculative* Vol.1 (London: Williams & Norgate, 1868). For more on Spencer’s thought, cf., Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1944).



evolution also applied to the development of the “social organism”.<sup>14</sup> Spencer believed that the natural environment in which a given people lived dictated, to a large extent, whether and how they evolved. Those inhabiting areas of high agricultural production tended to have high population densities, which in turn allowed for economic specialization. Once people were able to specialize in a specific field, they were then able to experiment with various techniques of production, leading to innovations and inventions. Over time, societies existing in these conditions would evolve and grow, eventually becoming civilized. In contrast, people living in areas not supporting high agricultural production had to spend much more time simply procuring food and other necessities simply to survive, thus any chances of economic specialization, leading to technological advances and civilization, were frustrated.<sup>15</sup>

Spencer’s theory served to sanction and justify both the territorial and commercial colonization of the late nineteenth century, and ‘by defining itself as the precursor of a history common to all, the West could treat colonization as a generous undertaking to ‘help’ more or less ‘backward’ societies along the road to civilization.’<sup>16</sup> Peet and Hartwick argue that while Spencer’s theories gave license to European colonization, his thought was even more powerful in the United States. Social Darwinism, ‘applied to human societies, legitimated laissez-faire, market systems, private ownership of production resources, and social inequalities. Social Darwinism combined with the doctrine of Manifest Destiny provided a rationale for the Euro-American conquest of the North American continent and the near-elimination of its indigenous inhabitants.’<sup>17</sup>

These ideological shifts towards a rampant expansionism and more overt racism were to obviously have detrimental effects on missionaries, those who received them, and the relationships between the two.<sup>18</sup> Prior to this period, most

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<sup>14</sup> Peet and Hartwick, *Theories of Development*, p. 66.

<sup>15</sup> Peet and Hartwick, *Theories of Development*, pp. 66-67

<sup>16</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 43.

<sup>17</sup> Peet and Hartwick, *Theories of Development*, p. 67.

<sup>18</sup> Because this paper’s focus is on relationships between the churches of Global and World Christianity and how their conditions and worldviews changed over time, it does not cover one of the most important movements to take place in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – Ethiopianism. This movement gave rise to what became known as the African Independent (or Indigenous) Churches (AIC) and ‘traces its roots to nineteenth-century movements in which African Christians separated themselves from churches established, to varying degrees, by Western missionaries.’ Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 265. Cobley agrees that the AIC movement was, at least partly, a reaction against the imposition of Western culture, norms, and values associated with the spread of

mainline Protestant evangelicals, while having no doubt about the superiority of Western culture, still saw all humans as essentially equal.<sup>19</sup> For example, Ross gives specific examples of how this was lived out, including the Glasgow Missionary Society's work at Lovedale College in the Eastern Cape, the CMS's Fourah Bay College, and Henry Venn's support of Samuel Ajayi Crowther as Bishop. These notwithstanding, '[in] the world of politics ... egalitarianism was already defeated. The low-qualification, nonracial franchise granted for the new Assembly of the Cape Colony in 1853 and the attempt at "Reconstruction" of the defeated rebel southern states of America between 1865 and 1871 were the last flings in public policy in the English-speaking world of this older view of humanity.'<sup>20</sup>

Because mainline Protestant evangelicals had up to this time viewed all humans as essentially belonging to the same race, they had long questioned the legitimacy of empire building. According to Bebbington, there were three categories of sin inherent in empire building: wrongs within the British Empire, evils bound up with its extension, and forms of wickedness practiced beyond its bounds.<sup>21</sup> While

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Christianity by missionaries. He states that '[the] first generation of black Christians in Southern Africa went through a painful process of critical examination and experiment as they struggled to assimilate new economic, social, and religious values. These values were provided to them mainly by white missionaries and were largely based on European models. It was part of this dialectical process that an independent black church movement – quickly labeled by friends and foes the "Ethiopian Movement" – had emerged at the end of the nineteenth century.' Alan Gregor Copley, 'Political Struggle Among Black Christians in South Africa to 1948' in *Church History* 3 (September 1991), p. 356. David Barrett agrees that the foundation for many AICs can be seen as 'socio-political, for he sees AICs as one manifestation of many African protest and resistance movements that arose in the colonial period. He says that the "common root cause" for the whole AIC movement is a reaction to European missions, which had exhibited a "failure to love" in their attitudes to African people.' Allan Anderson, 'A "Failure to Love"? Western Missions and the Emergence of African Initiated Churches in the Twentieth Century' in *Missiology: An International Review* 29 (July 2001), p. 276. To read more on the AIC movements, cf., Allan Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost: The Spirituality and Experience of Pentecostals and Zionist/Apostolic Churches in South Africa* (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2000); Deji Ayegboym and S. Ademola Ishola, *African Indigenous Churches: An Historical Perspective* (Lagos, Nigeria: Greater Heights Publications, 1997); David B. Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements* (Nairobi, Kenya: Oxford University Press, 1968); and Harold W. Turner, *History of an African Independent Church: The Church of the Lord (Aladura)* 2 vols, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967). Although the largest and most powerful independent churches took root in Africa, similar movements arose in other areas where nationals found themselves under the direction and ecclesiastical control of Western agents: Cf., Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 268-271.

<sup>19</sup> Andrew C. Ross, 'Christian Missions and Attitudes of Race', in Andrew Porter (ed), *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880-1914* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), p. 87. Ross notes that during this time, economic and social class consciousness was a much more powerful barrier to relationships than race or ethnicity.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew C. Ross, 'Christian Missions and Attitudes of Race', p. 88.

<sup>21</sup> D.W. Bebbington, 'Atonement, Sin, and Empire, 1880-1914' in Andrew Porter (ed), *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880-1914* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), p. 22.

each of these colored the way in which mainline Protestant evangelicals saw Britain's colonial efforts, it was the third that was to be the most influential during this period:

Each of these three categories of institutionalized wickedness had different effects on evangelical attitudes to empire. The first cast the British authorities in the role of potential benefactors who might eliminate evil practices, and yet at the same time those officials committed wrongs such as promoting false religion themselves. Evangelicals were simultaneously attracted and repelled, so that the consequences for their view of empire were ambiguous. In the second category, the colonial rulers seem the agents of international brigandage, and so, especially in Nonconformist circles, there was strong suspicion of imperial expansion. The third category, however, had the opposite effect: Britain possessed the power to put down evils on the borders of her territory and, by annexation, to deliver whole regions from the risk of domination by another power with Catholic sympathies. British authorities were not expected to exclude Catholic missionaries, let alone propagate Protestantism, but it was assumed that they would give no favor to Rome and hoped that they would erect no obstacles to the gospel. This third factor tended to turn evangelicals into friends of the growth of empire. So their overall stance on the question of imperialism was determined in large measure by how far British power abroad was seen as harbinger of righteousness.<sup>22</sup>

When compared to how it was practiced by other European powers seeking expansion, most mainline Protestant evangelicals saw the British aggressive humanitarian form of colonialism as benign. Furthermore, because they saw this third category as being a positive contribution to the lives of those colonized, over time most objections to colonial expansion ended.

In Britain, a significant factor in this change had to do with the missionaries themselves. As the end of the nineteenth century approached, there was a qualitative difference in the educational background of those who felt called to missions:

For the first three-quarters of the century the standard missionary product had been a man of humble background and education who would often not have been accepted for the home ministry. ... All of this changed in the high imperial period. The universities, Cambridge above all, produced vast numbers of graduate volunteers, so much so that university students at length saw themselves as the responsible body for world evangelization.<sup>23</sup>

As the volunteers went abroad, their educational background, along with ideologies of empire and the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race, greatly affected how they interacted with those to whom they were sent: 'Even among one-time supporters of Venn's principles there developed a sense of caution and misgivings as to the capacity

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<sup>22</sup> Bebbington, 'Atonement, Sin, and Empire, 1880-1914', p. 23.

<sup>23</sup> Walls, 'The British' in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 6 (April 1982), p. 60.

- financial, administrative, ethical, spiritual – of indigenous Christians in many places to sustain churches from their own resources. These reservations were only reinforced by the emergence of young, impatient and far more narrowly ethnocentric or racially conscious missionaries in the late 1880s and 1890s.’<sup>24</sup> As a result, by the beginning of the twentieth century the majority of those involved in British missions celebrated not only the spread of the gospel, but also the spread of Western culture and morals and their role as instructors to the rest of the world

We have noted that in both Britain and America, missions were seen as expansion. Britain’s expansion, from the beginning, concentrated on areas and peoples overseas. However, because of westward expansion, missions in America had primarily focused at home: ‘American overseas missions were a continuation and extension of home missions. The Christianity in twentieth-century American missions was determined by the nineteenth-century Christian movement along the frontier and the evangelization of new cities. The whole climate of American Christian thinking was conditioned by expansion.’<sup>25</sup> By the 1870s, this westward expansion was completed; thus, ‘[at] this time, the North American missions had taken the lead in global missions, modeling an activist and pragmatic spirit. People simply wanted to help those in other parts of the world who seemed less fortunate. But once again, power and authority went hand in hand.’<sup>26</sup>

An ardent advocate of expansion, both domestic and overseas, was the Congregationalist Josiah Strong (1847-1916), whose writings had a profound impact on American perceptions of both missions and ‘manifest destiny’. Strong had been a successful home missionary in the Wyoming Territory under the auspices of the American Home Missionary Society (AHMS).<sup>27</sup> Due to his success in church growth and evangelism, he was asked in 1881 to be secretary of the Ohio Home Missionary Society, which ‘managed Congregational home mission work in Ohio, western

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<sup>24</sup> Andrew Porter, *Religion versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 288.

<sup>25</sup> Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, p. 227. Hutchison argues that Americans did not consider Manifest Destiny as colonialism: ‘The term “imperialism” was not invented until the 1850’s, and even then it connoted a “colonialism” that Americans, generally oblivious to the colonialism involved in their conquest and management of the native Americans, were inordinately proud of having avoided.’ Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 60. Hutchison is also credited with stating that, even though America was not involved directly with territorial expansion, missions gave Americans ‘a moral equivalent for imperialism.’ Cf., Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, pp. 91-124.

<sup>26</sup> Joerg Rieger, ‘Theology and Mission Between Neocolonialism and Postcolonialism’ in *Mission Studies* 2 (2004), p. 204.

<sup>27</sup> The AHMS was the domestic equivalent to the ABCFM.

Pennsylvania, western Virginia, and Kentucky.’<sup>28</sup> Again, Strong was highly successful and as a result, was asked in 1884 to write what became his most famous book, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (1885).<sup>29</sup> In *Our Country*, Strong presented reasons why the United States was destined for greatness, although he also noted that this greatness was not automatic but would come as Christians answered God’s call to spread the Gospel:

It presented the “present and prospective greatness” of the United States in terms of its immense landmass, abundant agriculture, unsurpassed manufacturing possibilities, mineral resources, communications, commerce, and future population. .... [It] expressed a *conditional* form of manifest destiny, conditional upon the faithful response of American Christians in evangelizing the nation through home missions.<sup>30</sup>

Strong’s belief was that if American Christians would be faithful to God and create the kind of country God willed, then there would be additional benefits in expanding power and influence overseas. Strong’s

primary purpose was to plead for the saving of ‘our’ America – a homogeneous Protestant America – from the divisive forces threatening it such as Roman Catholicism, intemperance, and materialism. But in developing the argument for domestic reform, stress was given to the nation’s potential for overseas expansion. [He] suggested that corruption within the United States had a particularly invidious potential since it could undermine the nation’s world mission.<sup>31</sup>

Added to this notion of conditional ‘manifest destiny’ was Strong’s belief in the inherent superiority of the Anglo-Saxon. In accordance with the prevailing thought of the day, he quoted Herbert Spencer:

From biological truths it is to be inferred that the eventual mixture of the allied varieties of the Aryan race, forming the population, will produce a more

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<sup>28</sup> Wendy J. Deichmann Edwards, ‘Forging an Ideology of American Missions’ in Wilbert R. Shenk (ed), *North American Foreign Missions, 1810-1914: Theology, Theory, and Policy* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), p. 172.

<sup>29</sup> James Eldin Reed, ‘American Foreign Policy, The Politics of Missions and Josiah Strong, 1890-1900’ in *Church History* 2 (June 1972), p. 232. Edwards argues that, although Strong’s name was made famous by the publication of this book, its ideas were not new: ‘...Strong was not responsible for either the title or the basic argument of this national best-seller. His work was actually a revision of the American Home Mission Society’s (AHMS) official but outdated handbook, *Our Country. Number Two. A Plea for Home Missions*. The last edition of this handbook had appeared in 1858. It, in turn, had resulted from a reworking of the original, 1842 tract: *Our Country; Its Capabilities, Its Perils, and Its Hope: Being a Plea for the Early Establishment of Gospel Institutions in the Destitute Portions of the United States*. Understandably, by having rewritten, reasserted, and contributed to its contents in his own words and style, Strong was practically ascribed ownership of *Our Country* and its message when it appeared in its final form.’ Edwards, ‘Forging an Ideology for American Missions’, p. 164.

<sup>30</sup> Edwards, ‘Forging an Ideology for American Missions’, p. 174.

<sup>31</sup> Paul R. Meyer, ‘The Fear of Cultural Decline: Josiah Strong’s Thought about Reform and Expansion’ in *Church History* 3 (September 1973), p. 397.

powerful type of man than has hitherto existed, and a type of man more plastic, more adaptable, more capable of undergoing the modifications needful for complete social life. I think, whatever difficulties they may have to surmount, and whatever tribulations they may have to pass through, the Americans may reasonably look forward to a time when they will have produced a civilization grander than any the world has known.<sup>32</sup>

Just as Darwin taught evolution in the natural world and Spencer taught evolution in the social world, Strong believed in evolution in the spiritual world. He had no 'doubt that the result of this competition of races will be the "survival of the fittest".'<sup>33</sup> *Our Country* sold over two hundred thousand copies and influenced a generation of Christians and their view of America's place in the world:

While secular prophets of U.S. manifest destiny were proclaiming unconditional American rights to expansion, the earlier versions of *Our Country* were professing destiny that was of necessity conditional upon faithful obedience to the divine directive. ...Strong offered a perspective which lent credence to, and was in turn supported by, the increasingly popular scientific hypothesis that the world and its people were evolving. He faithfully and ingeniously reinforced this hypothesis with the long-standing Calvinist belief that history happens according to God's purpose and plan.<sup>34</sup>

As in Britain, the mood in the late nineteenth century in America was one of optimism and expansion. And though some missionaries might speak up concerning issues of justice, like British missions the issue was to control and Christianize the expansion, not to question it:

With an outlook parallel to the general national mood, foreign missions could easily fall into line with the national efforts for imperialist expansion. This occurred at the time of the Spanish-American War and the acquisition of the Philippine Islands. The rapid growth of missions began a decade before that war and its attendant imperialist fervor, so that growth can hardly be seen as

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<sup>32</sup> Strong's use of Spencer is quoted in Edwards, 'Forging an Ideology for American Missions' p. 187.

<sup>33</sup> Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (New York: Baker & Taylor, 1891), p. 223.

<sup>34</sup> Edwards, 'Forging an Ideology for American Missions', pp. 189-190. Meyer argues that, although Strong's earlier works, including *Our Country*, ring with certainty, his later works start to show that he was asking questions about the superiority of Protestant America: 'What is perhaps the most noteworthy development in Strong's thought with regard to international outreach and domestic change is his growing uncertainty about the value and the survival of the Protestant Anglo-Saxon culture of which he was a part. His earliest writings conveyed an essentially optimistic attitude about the future of this dominant cultural order. A feeling of superiority about the Anglo-Saxon way of life, in fact, infused all his works and was the key presupposition behind virtually all his thought about expansion and reform. In his later works, however, a profound sense of fear was added to the earlier optimism, though the older hopeful attitude by no means disappeared. Strong's increasing anxiety was not insignificant and may suggest something important about the temper of an era often characterized as markedly optimistic.' Meyer, 'The Fear of Cultural Decline: Josiah Strong's Thought about Reform and Expansion', p. 396.

the result of imperialist interests. But when the imperial expansion came missionaries generally did not oppose it.<sup>35</sup>

### 3.2 Effects on the Policies of Anderson and Venn

Both Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn were champions of the ‘three-selves’ principle and wanted desperately to see self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating indigenous churches take root in local soil. However, the late nineteenth century mood of expansion, along with the prevailing attitudes on race, was to make their dreams almost impossible to realize.

For Anderson and the ABCFM, one of the biggest obstacles was a growing emphasis on denominationalism. As European powers carved up control of the world and Americans were seeking access to economic markets, the same spirit of division and power made its way into the church: ‘Though unitive impulses persisted, and provided something of a counter force, denominations after 1850 were operating with new vigor in sponsoring mission personnel, managing mission stations and institutions, and organizing native churches. The various church bodies became markedly less willing to leave foreign missions to pandenominational or nondenominational associations.’<sup>36</sup> An example of this can be seen in the ABCFM. Although it had been primarily Congregational from its inception in 1810, the ABCFM had always enjoyed the support of other denominations which sought to work collectively overseas. However, as a result of this new emphasis on denominationalism,

[between] 1857 and 1870, the three denominational bodies associated with the Congregationalists in the ABCFM – the Reformed Dutch, the German Reformed, and the New School Presbyterian – all withdrew and placed their missions directly under their own boards. The case of the Reformed Dutch separation showed rather clearly what forces were at work: resentment against ‘outside’ control by the ABCFM and its strong-minded secretary; growing denominational self-consciousness; practical considerations of money-raising and of smooth relations between the denomination and its own missionaries; and, most portentously, a willingness or even eagerness to have native churches replicate the ones at home.<sup>37</sup>

For the denominations that broke away from the ABCFM, control was a major issue. They believed that since the ABCFM was dominated by Congregationalists, the

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<sup>35</sup> Charles W. Forman, ‘The Americans’ in *The International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 6 (April 1982), p. 54.

<sup>36</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 95.

<sup>37</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, pp. 95-96.

churches being developed on the mission field were, by definition, Congregationalist. For this they blamed the Secretary. It 'became a common, however muddled, accusation: that Anderson's undenominational native churches were really Congregational churches in disguise, and that Anderson wanted to rule over these churches as archbishop, if not as pope. In any case, why not allow non-Congregationalists to organize the native in the way *they* thought best?'<sup>38</sup> Whether the charge that the 'nondenominational' churches produced by ABCFM missionaries were really Congregational churches in disguise is a moot point. By the late nineteenth-century, the operative word was 'control'; control of the World churches, their expansion, their theology, and their polity. In a context of control by outside agents, any view of cooperation or extension of agency to World Christians was out of the question.

These changing world views also affected Venn's policies and the CMS.<sup>39</sup> For the CMS, which was a missionary structure within the Church of England, issues of polity had much to do with this. In many lands where the CMS operated, World churches were established and growing. However, because of British expansion, colonists were also living in these territories and formed Anglican churches of their own. The question arose as to whether these churches were to be united in one Anglican communion. Although Venn would have desired this, he was also a realist and saw a potential problem: 'That, he was convinced, [was] the problem of race. The problem, as he saw it, was that of the dominance of one race over the other. ... This dependency had to be broken if an effective indigenous church was to emerge.'<sup>40</sup> In answering this problem, he felt that settlers should be led by European clergy and a European bishop. However, 'native' churches should not fall under this same jurisdiction as they would always be seen as inferior by the Europeans. Instead, they were to be overseen by the missionary society until such time that they could stand on their own. When that time was reached, they would be placed under a separate bishop who would look after them. For example, when discussing the problem of a bishopric in India, Venn states:

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<sup>38</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 96.

<sup>39</sup> For an example of this change in CMS policy towards the mission in Sierra Leone, cf., Jehu Hanciles, *Euthanasia of a Mission: African Church Autonomy in a Colonial Context* (Westport Connecticut: Praeger Publishing, 2002).

<sup>40</sup> C. Peter Williams, 'The Church Mission Society and the Indigenous Church' in Dana L. Robert (ed), *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), p. 88.



...[In] a Colony of Christian settlers a Bishop is able to stimulate a Christian people to build Churches and to support additional Clergymen: whilst a Bishop among the Heathen is dependent upon the voluntary agency of Missionary Societies at a distance to supply the means and the men for the work of Ministry. As soon as 'the Mission' has, through God's blessing, raised up a self-supporting Native Church, with its Native Pastors, so that the Missionary action of the Society in England may be withdrawn, then will be the time for giving the Native Church a Bishop of its own.<sup>41</sup>

After many years of strong leadership to the CMS, Venn died in 1873. After his death, the CMS was more or less directed by a committee of secretaries so that power and influence was no longer in the hands of one person any longer. In 1885, Eugene Stock (1836-1928) became one of these secretaries, and he was to have significant influence in changing the direction and policies of the CMS towards the growing World churches.<sup>42</sup> Stock and his contemporaries believed that the episcopate was being compromised by following Venn's policy of having two bishops, one for settler churches and the other for indigenous churches, in the same territory: 'For those anxious to assert a theory of episcopacy that they believed was of apostolic origin and was too often compromised at home, the mission field offered an opportunity to demonstrate the essential nature of the church.'<sup>43</sup> For this new leadership, this meant that there was one Church, and that the settlers and World Christians should fall under the same jurisdiction, a radical departure from Venn: 'The new committee effectively and radically changed the CMS policy away from the Venn commitment to an indigenous church. The single most dominant influence on it was Eugene Stock.'<sup>44</sup> On one hand, Stock's belief in the nature of the church was a product of his time and the increasing focus on denominationalism. On the other, however, he was woefully naive about race relations and the viability of having all the churches in an area under one European bishop. Venn's stance on this issue had been to protect the emerging churches from European domination and racism. However, Stock

was sanguine that the native church would graciously accept the evidence of European superiority. ...[He] was ... not only ignoring the certain dominance of the English in countries like India where there was a significant, semi-

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<sup>41</sup> Henry Venn, 'Extension of Episcopate Overseas' in Max Warren (ed), *To Apply the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Henry Venn* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), p. 165.

<sup>42</sup> For more on these changes in leadership, and how Stock affected CMS policy, cf., Kevin Ward, 'The Legacy of Eugene Stock' in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 2 (April 1999), p. 75.

<sup>43</sup> Walls, 'The British', p. 60.

<sup>44</sup> Williams, 'The Church Mission Society and the Indigenous Church', p. 107.

permanent, but small nonmissionary English presence, he was also providing a rationale for continued English supremacy in areas such as West Africa where the nonmissionary English presence was, in terms of church membership and influence, entirely insignificant.<sup>45</sup>

The CMS policies, under the influence of Stock, went against everything that Henry Venn had worked for as Secretary: 'The objective of the self-governing indigenous church remained married to so much unrealistic acceptance of the European superiority that it was never likely to be achieved. Stock had killed off the ideals of Venn. But he was only able to do so, even granting all his considerable propagandist skills, because the generation for which he spoke no longer shared those ideals.'<sup>46</sup> However, by ignoring the racial and cultural realities of his policies, he helped to create an environment in which many leaders and members of the emerging World churches longed and yearned for more voice and power in the coming decades: 'Where the ideals had not been killed off was in the countries and among the indigenous peoples to whom the missionaries had gone. The ideal of the self-governing church lived on powerfully and influentially and as a potent factor as both church and state took control of their own destinies in the twentieth century.'<sup>47</sup>

The discussion so far can leave one having a very dim view of the missionary enterprise during this period; however, one must also remember that history is never simple and straightforward. As Bosch states, '[the] picture ... is a bleak one. It is a portrait of the Western missionary enterprise's compromise with and complicity in imperialism and colonial expansion. It is, however, not the whole picture, and it is simply inadequate to contend that mission was nothing other than the spiritual side of imperialism and always faithful servant of the latter. Reality was more ambivalent.'<sup>48</sup>

One example of this can be seen when tracing the ecumenical meetings, both in the mission field and at home, where issues were debated freely and, over time, more non-Europeans were invited to attend. These meetings signaled, despite the mood of the day, a growing concern for mission cooperation across denominational

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<sup>45</sup> Williams, 'The Church Mission Society and the Indigenous Church', p. 109.

<sup>46</sup> Williams, 'The Church Mission Society and the Indigenous Church', p. 111.

<sup>47</sup> Williams, 'The Church Mission Society and the Indigenous Church', p. 111.

<sup>48</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 310. For examples of missionaries siding with nationals in disputes with colonial governments, Cf., Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 216. Even with these few examples, Gründer argues that while some missionaries defended the rights of nationals, they never attacked the colonial system itself: '[From] the beginning, the Christian envoys played their parts as "advocates for the natives" only by criticizing actual colonial evils but hardly ever criticizing the colonial system as such.' Horst Gründer, 'Christian Mission and Colonial Expansion – Historical and Structural Connections' in *Mission Studies* 1 (1995), p. 20.

lines. One can also see, especially in the conferences that took place in the mission field, the first, albeit small, steps of participation by non-European representatives of the World Christian churches.

### 3.3 Nineteenth Century Mission Conferences

During the second half of the nineteenth-century, and despite growing denominationalism at home, missionaries serving on the field from different societies felt the need to meet: 'Inevitably as missionaries moved into India, China, Japan, and the countries of Africa and Latin America, they encountered problems requiring joint consultation. Nearly always this meant sharing information and providing mutual counsel. ... Yet far from home, missionaries enjoyed these assemblies for the sheer joy of being together – for Christian fellowship....'<sup>49</sup> The first of these conferences took place in northern India in 1855. Missionaries from six different societies attended, as did 'three Indian ministers, all listed with the Free Church of Scotland missionaries.'<sup>50</sup> These meetings took place every two years and by 1863, a conference was held that

was the largest gathering of the kind yet held in Northern India, enlisting seventy-one persons, many of whom were laymen and eight of whom were Indians, including one rajah. The conference provides a criterion for assaying the relationship of missionaries to the growing churches in India. A paper read by an Indian pastor produced forthright discussion between Indians and Europeans on their relations to each other.<sup>51</sup>

Another example of participation by leaders of the World Christian churches can be seen at a conference in Mexico City in 1888: 'At least one Mexican pastor is mentioned in the report, and a Spanish, as well as English, secretary was appointed; so one may assume that Mexicans were present throughout with the right to speak.'<sup>52</sup> Over the next several decades, similar conferences took place in southern India, Japan, and China. Africa was the last area to experience these, where a conference was hosted in Johannesburg in 1904.

From the reports of these conferences, it is clear that the problems from country to country and field to field were much the same, spurred by a rapid growth of World Christian churches:

It is apparent that ... over a half-century these conferences confronted the same situations. As years passed, problems faced by missionaries broadened.

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<sup>49</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>50</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 18.

<sup>51</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>52</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 29.

They reflected the changing times. But they remained fundamentally the same: ...the relations between missionaries and the Christians among whom they laboured, especially between missionaries and their national co-workers, the growth of the church, its self-support and self-government, and comity and cooperation on the field. It is equally clear that each successive conference mirrored the expansion of the younger churches. A comparison of the earliest conference reports with those at the close of the century provides a striking picture of rapidly growing young churches.<sup>53</sup>

One would have hoped that since each successive conference showed such growth, this would have ultimately led to more participation by members from World Christian churches. Unfortunately, with a few British exceptions, Westerners dominated in both attendance and the discussions that took place:

[These] missionary conferences provided for virtually no representation of nationals. ...In India where British societies predominated, the participation of nationals in missionary conferences was more advanced than in any other field. The ratio of missionaries to Indians was usually about ten to one, but Indians *were* invited. They shared in the deliberations, read papers, and voted. In Japan, however, where American missionaries predominated in the conferences, there was relatively little participation by the few Japanese who were admitted as visitors. A similar situation prevailed in China.<sup>54</sup>

Despite this exclusion, these conferences were, in essence, working conferences. They made resolutions, as well as discussed, debated, and voted on various issues. In many ways, the lessons learned at these field conferences would help shape the International Missionary Conferences which began in Edinburgh in 1910.

The field conferences 'had their counterparts at the home base.'<sup>55</sup> Beginning in 1854 in New York, successive conferences were held every few years in Liverpool (1860) and London (1854, 1878, and 1888). These conferences, as those in the field, had scant representation from World Christian churches. Liverpool (1860) was attended by 126 delegates, however '[the] Reverend Behari Lal Singh, a licensed preacher of the Free Church of Scotland in Calcutta, was the only person representing the fruit of missionary endeavor.'<sup>56</sup> The participants at London (1878) 'included more than 160 delegates... The American Baptists brought with them a Burmese pastor who turned out to be the only non-Occidental in the meeting.'<sup>57</sup> The next conference in London (1888) 'was the first attempt at a world-wide missionary

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<sup>53</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 32.

<sup>54</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 33.

<sup>55</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 35.

<sup>56</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 39.

<sup>57</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 41.

conference.... The personal roll had upon it the name of 1341 British, 102 Americans, 30 Canadians, 41 Continental, and 3 Colonial.’<sup>58</sup> All of these meetings, despite the attempts to make them ‘world-wide’, were small in nature and narrow in scope. That, however, was to change dramatically in the first meeting of the twentieth-century, the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions in New York (1900), which was profoundly influenced by the appearance and rapid growth of the Student Volunteer Movement and its Watchword.

### 3.4 The Student Volunteer Movement and the Watchword

The beginnings of the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM) can be found in the work of Luther D. Wishard (1854-1925) and the preaching of evangelist Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899). Wishard, who worked for the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), ‘had long wanted to assemble Christian students in a national conference, but after years of delay, in mid-April 1886, he gained Moody’s consent to meet with such a group of college men for Bible study and shared Christian living.’<sup>59</sup> One of the speakers at the conference was A.T. Pierson (1837-1911) who delivered a powerful sermon on God’s calling to evangelize, and ‘[on] 16 July 1886, 251 students from eighty-seven colleges, summoned to Mt Hermon, Massachusetts by evangelist Dwight L. Moody, were rallied by Pierson, “All should go, and go to all.”’ By the time the conference was over, one hundred students had volunteered to go as missionaries. This was the actual beginning of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions.’<sup>60</sup> The SVM movement, which was officially formed in 1888, grew quickly and by its second year of existence over three thousand young people had volunteered for overseas service<sup>61</sup> These numbers continued to increase over the years, particularly those sent from the United States: ‘In twenty-five years, chiefly through the influence of the SVM, the American missionary force was to increase more than tenfold: ... 350 in 1890 was to become 4,000 in 1915.’<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Edwin M. Bliss (ed), *Missionary Conference New York, 1900: Report of the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions, Held in Carnegie Hall and Neighboring Churches, April 21 to May 1* Vol. 1 (New York: American Tract Society, 1900), p. 22; hereafter cited as *New York 1900* Vol.1.

<sup>59</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 86.

<sup>60</sup> Denton Lotz, ‘The Watchword for World Evangelization’ in *International Review of Mission* 68 (April 1979), p. 177.

<sup>61</sup> Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 217.

<sup>62</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, p. 17.

There is no doubt that this increase in numbers was impressive. But, according to Harder, there was a qualitative difference in the type of missionaries being sent that was more important than the quantity:

More important ... than the numbers was the new kind of missionary the SVM produced. Generally the 19<sup>th</sup> century standard British and American missionary recruit had come from a humble background and had been unordainable for the home ministry. The student movements helped make missions respectable among the social and educated elite. Of course the volunteers were products of the imperial generation and held to its values. Utopian idealism prevailed and most believed in the invincibility of the doctrine of progress, and with the application of Social Darwinism, in the perfectibility of humans and their institutions. This optimism was reflected in an emerging cultural superiority of the Western nations and in a nascent internationalism with its 'white man's burden' sense of destiny. These cultural views were transferred by the early volunteers from a political internationalism to a spiritual one. Foreign missions assumed the form of the global military conquest with the fortunate recipients of that endeavor receiving not just the Gospel but the manifold benefits of Western civilization. Military terminology became a standard part of the nomenclature of the SVM leaders.<sup>63</sup>

The most influential leader of the SVM was John R. Mott (1865-1955). Mott was one of the students who attended the Mount Hermon student conference and a member of the group of one hundred students that committed their lives to mission. He was the first chairperson of the SVM at its formation in 1888 and had great influence on its direction over the next few decades. To galvanize support and give focus to the SVM's mission, Mott used a phrase that became known as the Watchword: 'Mott did not invent its motto, "The evangelization of the world in this generation," but he made it his own.'<sup>64</sup>

Mott published one of his most influential books in 1900, using the watchword as its title. It was a book that was to be significant not only for the direction of the SVM, but for Global church missionary efforts as a whole. From the very beginning of his book, he sets out to explain clearly what the Watchword meant. For Mott,

[the] evangelization of the world in this generation ... means the preaching of the Gospel to those who are living. To us who are responsible for the

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<sup>63</sup> Ben Harder, 'The Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions and Its Contribution to 20<sup>th</sup> Century Missions' in *Missiology* 8 (April 1980), p. 144.

<sup>64</sup> C Howard Hopkins, 'John R. Mott: Architect of World Mission and Unity' in Gerald H. Anderson, Robert T. Coote, Norman A. Horner, and James M. Philips (eds), *Mission Legacies: Biographical Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1994), p. 82. The Watchword had been used previously, but never with the power and effect employed by Mott. The term is traditionally credited to A.T. Pierson, however Hutchison argues that Royal Wilder appears to have been the first to use it. Cf., Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 99.

preaching of the Gospel, it means in our life-time; to those to whom it is to be preached it means in their life-time. The unevangelized for whom we as Christians are responsible live in this generation; and the Christians whose duty it is to present Christ to them live in this generation.<sup>65</sup>

In response to those who were critical of the Watchword's use, he then defined it by explaining it in the negative; i.e., what it was not.<sup>66</sup> First, Mott said that '[it] does not mean the conversion of the world within the generation. Our part consists in bringing the gospel to bear on unsaved men.'<sup>67</sup> Second, he insisted that '[it] does not imply the hasty or superficial preaching of the gospel.'<sup>68</sup> Thirdly, 'it does not signify the Christianization of the world, if by that is meant the permeating of the world with Christian ideas and the dominance of the principles of Christian civilization in all parts of the world. If we may judge by history, that would require centuries.'<sup>69</sup> Lastly, despite the charge from some that the Watchword was a prediction of a spiritualized 'manifest destiny', Mott countered that '[it] is not to be regarded as a prophecy. Stress is placed on what may be done and ought to be done, not on what is actually to occur.'<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> John R. Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation* (New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1900), p. 6.

<sup>66</sup> There had been, and continued to be, much dissension regarding the use of the Watchword by missionary statesmen from the Continent, and especially by the Germans. This disagreement had caused so much controversy that Mott and his colleague, Royal Wilder, visited Gustav Warneck, Professor of Missions at Halle, Germany, and the preeminent statesman of Continental missions at the time, in 1899. While Mott and Wilder felt the meeting was a success, Warneck refused to attend the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions in New York 1900, at which he had been invited to speak. Dr. August Schrieber attended in his place and read a statement from Warneck which said in part: 'Very energetically are the watchwords promulgated nowadays, "expansion," diffusion," "evangelization of the world in this generation." I will not deny that in view of the present openings all over the world, such mottoes are entitled to consideration, and so far as this is the case, I certainly have no wish to weaken their force. But without due limitation and completion, I consider them dangerous. The mission command bids us "go" into all the world, not "fly." ... The kingdom of heaven is like a field in which the crop is healthily growing at a normal rate, not like a hothouse. Impatient pressing forward has led to the waste of much precious toil, and more than one old mission field has been unwarrantably neglected in the haste to begin work in a new field. The non-Christian world is not to be carried by assault.' *New York 1900*, pp. 289-290. It is important to note that another contentious issue was the use of the vernacular, which Warneck considered a necessity, or English as the medium for instruction and preaching. To this issue Warneck states: 'English has become the language of intercourse throughout the wide world, but that must not tempt us to make it the language of missions. The missionary command does not say: "*Go ye and teach English to every creature.*" Not more, but less English in the missions, this should be the watchword of the twentieth century in this respect....' *New York 1900*, p. 291

<sup>67</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 7.

<sup>68</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p.8.

<sup>69</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 9.

<sup>70</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 9.

While granting a bit more credit to non-Occidental cultures and religions than his predecessors, Mott had much the same view of non-Christian cultures and beliefs as his contemporaries:

The non-Christian religions may be judged by their fruits. While they furnish some moral principles and precepts of value, they do not afford adequate standards and motives by which rightly to guide the life, nor the power to enable one to take the step between knowing duty and doing it. ...It is a significant fact that the thousands of missionaries scattered throughout the world, face to face with heathenism and thus in the best position to make a scientific study of the problem, bear such a unanimous testimony as to the practical results of the non-Christian religions as should forever banish any doubt or reservation regarding their inadequacy to meet the world's need.<sup>71</sup>

In the light of this, he asked a question that he expected to be on the conscience of every Christian in the world: 'Shall hundreds of millions of men now living, who need Christ and are capable of receiving help from Him, pass away without having even the opportunity to know Him?'<sup>72</sup>

Like Anderson and Venn, Mott went to the New Testament for his archetype of mission practice. According to Mott, '[the] age of the Apostles was pre-eminently a missionary age. The first generation of Christians did more to accomplish the evangelization of the accessible world than has any succeeding generation.'<sup>73</sup> And, like Anderson and Venn, Mott saw the 'right way' of doing missions in the establishment of indigenous churches, as practiced by Paul in the New Testament:

Mott did not shy away from the Westernizing or civilizing impulse that was so much a part of the thinking of his day. However, he believed that the preaching of the gospel was preeminent and that once the gospel was received and believed, it would transform cultures and peoples as it was indigenized into a given society:

While the missionary enterprise should not be diverted from the immediate and controlling aim of preaching the Gospel where Christ has not been named, and while this work should have the right of way as the most urgent part of our task, it must ever be looked upon as but a means to the mighty and inspiring object of enthroning Christ in individual life, in family life, in social life, in national life, in international life, in every relationship of mankind; and, to this end, of planting and developing in all non-Christian lands self-supporting, self-directing and self-propagating churches which shall become so thoroughly rooted in the convictions and hearts of the people that if Christianity were to

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<sup>71</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 18.

<sup>72</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 19.

<sup>73</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 51.



die out in Europe and America, it would abide in purity and as a missionary power in its new home and would live on through the centuries.<sup>74</sup>

Mott believed that carrying the gospel to the world was not only good for non-Christian peoples, but was vital for the life of the churches at home as it enabled them to be active in the world. And like those before him, Mott saw the conquest of European and American powers and the opening up of the world as God's will:

God has opened up within fifty years the most populous regions of the globe.... Railway lines have been extended all over Southern Asia. Steamboats are now found on lakes and rivers in Central Africa, and railways are penetrating that continent in every direction. ...Within a generation Africa has been parceled out among the nations of Western Europe. Aggressive missionary operations are now carried on in all the great divisions of that continent.<sup>75</sup>

Along with the belief that the evangelization of the world was a national duty and that God was providentially opening the way, he was also, however, unmistakably affected by a sense of guilt about what Westernization, unchecked, was doing to peoples of the global South:

The forces of evil are not deferring their operations to the next generation. With world-wide enterprise and with ceaseless vigor they are seeking to accomplish their deadly work in this generation. This is not true only of the dire influences which have been at work in the unevangelized nations for centuries, but also of those which have come from the so-called Christian lands. By the liquor traffic, by the opium trade and by the licentious lives and gambling habits of some of our countrymen we have greatly increased the misery and woe of the heathen. All non-Christian nations are being brought under the influences of the material civilization of the West, and these may easily work their injury unless controlled by the power of pure religion. The evangelization of the world in this generation is not, therefore, merely a matter of buying up the opportunity, but of helping to neutralize and supplant the effects of the sins of our own peoples.<sup>76</sup>

When assessing the profound impact of Mott, the SVM, and the Watchword on missions, especially in America, it would be easy to see this movement as simply a spiritual mirroring of the national mood. As Harder states:

This spiritual imperialism had positive and negative virtues. It gave the volunteers a courageousness for exploration and adventure which resulted in marked advances of missionary frontiers. Unfortunately, many identified too

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<sup>74</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 16. If one looks at the demographics of international Christianity then one has to admit that Mott was somewhat prophetic. Cf., Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>75</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, pp. 46-47.

<sup>76</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 28.

closely with the optimism of the age and became little more than spokespersons for the political and cultural ambitions of the West. These volunteers also felt destined to lead, a role they perceived for themselves which had great implications for the indigenous principle.<sup>77</sup>

It would be incorrect, however, to picture this movement in such a simplistic way. From the time of his volunteering at Mount Hermon, what Mott sought was a world-wide movement of Christians who, despite cultural, racial, and linguistic differences, would band together for the world's evangelization.<sup>78</sup> And he saw the SVM as a major catalyst for this task. From the beginning words of *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, Mott states:

The closing years of the nineteenth century have witnessed in all parts of Protestant Christendom an unprecedented development of missionary life and activity among young men and young women. A remarkable manifestation of this interest in the extension of the Kingdom of Christ has been among students. The Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, taking its rise at a conference of American and Canadian students in 1886, has spread from land to land, until it has now assumed an organized form in all Protestant countries. It has been transplanted even to the colleges of mission lands, so that today the Christian students of the Occident and the Orient, of the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, are united in the sublime purpose of enthroning Jesus Christ as King among all nations and races of men.<sup>79</sup>

Mott, recalling a sense of the oneness of humanity as seen in the early evangelicals, wrote that '[all] nations and races are one in God's intention, and therefore equally entitled to the Gospel.'<sup>80</sup> Mott was not oblivious to the particular situations of inequality on the mission field, and he called for unity: 'Both missionaries and native Christians frequently have to fight against mutual distrust and suspicion, and also against temptations to exclusiveness and a sense of superiority. Wherever such barriers are allowed to stand, they not only interfere with helpful social intercourse, but also prevent unity in Christian action.'<sup>81</sup> One of his answers to this problem was to rely on student movements rather than missionaries employed by societies. As student movements arose in each country, Mott believed that they were then responsible for the evangelization of their own area and people.<sup>82</sup> Mott believed that this was a large part of the 'significance of the Christian movements among the

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<sup>77</sup> Harder, 'The Student Volunteer Movement', p. 145.

<sup>78</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 89.

<sup>79</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 1.

<sup>80</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 20.

<sup>81</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 40.

<sup>82</sup> Harder, 'The Student Volunteer Movement', p. 143.

students of non-Christian lands. It is doing much to solve the problem of the world's speedy and thorough evangelization by uniting the native Christian students, first, to lead their fellow students to Christ, and then, after their preparation is complete, to go forth to evangelize their own countrymen.'<sup>83</sup> In Mott's words, the rise of these student movements in the traditionally non-Christian lands was the only way in which the dream of evangelizing the world could actually take place: 'The evangelization of Asia and Africa should not ... be regarded chiefly as a European or an American, but rather as an Asiatic and an African enterprise. ...No extensive field has ever been thoroughly evangelized but by its own sons. That seems to be God's method.'<sup>84</sup>

Mott's ultimate dream lay in the uniting of Christian students from around the world into one fellowship. In 1895, this became a reality with the formation of the World's Student Christian Federation (WSCF)<sup>85</sup>, which involved integrating the work of the YMCA and SVM. In *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, Mott describes this process and the power inherent in it:

The organized Christian movements among students constitute one of the largest and most potent forces in the Church. There are now fourteen great national and international organizations, namely, the American and Canadian Student Young Men's Christian Association; the American Student Women's Christian Association; the Australasian Student Christian Union; the British College Christian Union; the College Young Men's Christian Association of China; the French Christian Student Movement; the German Christian Students' Alliance; the Intercollegiate Young Men's Christian Association of India and Ceylon; the Netherlands Students' Christian Union; the Student Young Men's Christian Association Union of Japan; the Scandinavian University Christian Movement; the Students' Christian Association of South Africa; the Student Christian Movement in Mission Lands, and the Swiss Christian Students' Association. The movements have been united into a World's Student Christian Fellowship.<sup>86</sup>

For Mott, it was vital that as these movements came together, '[students] knew that they belonged to a world fellowship, and their leaders learned to think and plan in

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<sup>83</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 129.

<sup>84</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, pp. 167-168.

<sup>85</sup> Luther D. Wishard, who along with Dwight L. Moody was responsible for the 1886 Mount Hermon meeting, was also deserves credit for this. Wishard not only wanted to unite students in North America, but, through his work with the YMCA, tried to bring students of all nationalities together: 'In non-Occidental lands [he] planted and nurtured many Christian associations. Through his foresight the first student YMCA outside America was begun in 1884 in India. ...From 1888 to 1892 he traveled through the lands of the younger churches beginning new Associations and laying the foundations for national Student Movements that were later to become members of the World's Student Christian Federation.' Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p.89.

<sup>86</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, pp. 124-125.

terms of all denominations, all nations, and all races.’<sup>87</sup> In this light, he felt it was important that ‘the constituent members of the new world fellowship were equals....’<sup>88</sup> To achieve this unity and equality, the student movements in both non-Christian and Christian lands were to stay in close contact and affiliation through the WSCF:

[The YMCA] is now entrenched in nearly two hundred universities, Colleges and high schools of Asia, Africa, South America, and the Pacific Islands.... The Associations of Japan, China, of India and Ceylon, and of the remaining mission lands are united into intercollegiate movements, each having its own supervisory committee composed of missionaries and leading native Christians.... Thus they have been well characterized as Student Volunteer Movements for Home Missions. Through the World’s Student Christian Federation they are kept in close and helpful touch with the organized Christian student movements of Europe, American, South Africa, and Australasia. It would be difficult to overstate the importance of this union of the Christian students of Christian and non-Christian lands for the evangelization of the world.<sup>89</sup>

To promote inclusivity, the WSCF made it policy that nationals always be included in its meetings: ‘Even though it cost much in time and money, the Federation sought always to bring nationals from overseas to its meetings rather than to economize by allowing some missionary on furlough to represent the country he served.’<sup>90</sup> This served, at once, as both a challenge and a rebuke to the way missions were being practiced by the traditional mission societies. A wonderful example of this was seen at the WSCF Conference in Tokyo (1907):

[The] coming of Western students to the East to meet with Eastern students on the basis of full equality and shared purpose made a tremendous impression. And in a land then viewing Christianity with a jaundiced eye, this world gathering of Christian students helped greatly to dispel anti-Christian prejudice. Japan alone sent 443 delegates. From China came seventy-four. From other lands of the East came representative delegates. ...The Federation conference was ... in striking contrast to the Centennial Conferences of Christian Missions held in Shanghai in that same year, 1907. In the latter gathering there were hundreds of European and American missionaries, but the specially invited Chinese guests could be counted on the fingers of two hands. Thus did the student pioneering advance beyond the limits within which missionary societies worked.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 95.

<sup>88</sup> Hopkins, ‘John R. Mott: Architect of World Mission and Unity’, p. 82.

<sup>89</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, pp. 171-172.

<sup>90</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>91</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 94.

There is little doubt that the SVM was concerned with not only spreading Christianity, but also the benefits of Western civilization. That notwithstanding, these student movements gave Christians from all parts of the world chances to meet, strategize, and share together. There is also little doubt that, for World Christians, the SVM and WSCF gave opportunities for leadership and responsibility that were almost impossible to find in the work of the traditional mission societies. In a testimony to Mott's life and work, Hopkins states '[he] chose his associates with insight and trusted them to build indigenous entities to serve their own place and time.'<sup>92</sup> When looking at the important contributions of the SVM and the WSCF to a growing sense of oneness for Christians around the world, Rouse states that they enabled members of all churches to come together to discuss important issues pertaining to world mission, and that

[it] was through experiences of Christian unity that at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> leaders of many Churches ... all over Europe and America, throughout the British Commonwealth and amongst the younger Churches of Africa and the East, were led to abandon an attitude of aloofness and were prepared to play their part in the modern ecumenical movement.<sup>93</sup>

Over time the power of the SVM and the Watchword would wane. Bosch states that in the first years of its existence,

nearly thirteen thousand volunteers sailed from North America for overseas missionary service. By the second decade of the twentieth century the movement was, however, already in decline and the watchword losing its influence. At a conference held in 1917 the primary question was no longer "the evangelization of the world", but "Does Christ offer an adequate solution for the burning social and international questions of the day?"<sup>94</sup>

Yates concurs: '[The] watchword was an effective tool in the colleges until the 1914-18 war cut swathes through both optimism and potential recruits, and the SVM declined in the 1920s.'<sup>95</sup> That, however, was to take place later. As the beginning of the twentieth century approached, '[there] is no doubt that the watchword, spoken into a context of increasing optimism and belief in the values of North American culture and its potential for export, caught the imagination of young students.'<sup>96</sup> As delegates

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<sup>92</sup> Hopkins, 'John R. Mott: Architect of World Mission and Unity', pp. 83-84.

<sup>93</sup> Ruth Rouse, 'Voluntary Movements and the Changing Ecumenical Climate' in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948*, Vol. 1 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), p. 344.

<sup>94</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 323.

<sup>95</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>96</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 17-18.

from around the world gathered together in New York, '[the] tone of the conference was already set by Mott....'<sup>97</sup>

### 3.5 The Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions – New York (1900)

The Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions, which took place in New York from April 21 to May 1, 1900, was by far the largest conference or gathering that had ever taken place in the history of Global Christian missions, attended by two hundred mission societies and between 170,000 to 200,000 people from Europe, England, and the United States.<sup>98</sup> That said, the actual '[official] delegate status ... was limited to a total of 2,500 "members" drawn from each society or board, based on its field expenditures, with North American societies being limited to 1,666 seats. Ultimately 162 mission boards ... were represented (64 North American, 50 Continental, 35 United Kingdom and 13 others). More than 600 foreign missionaries working in fifty countries attended.'<sup>99</sup> It is important to note that while the word 'ecumenical' was used in the title of the conference, this was not because all churches, denominations, and societies were cooperating in the task of world mission or 'all portions of the Christian Church [were] to be represented in it by delegates, but because the plan of the campaign which it proposes covers the whole area of the inhabited globe.'<sup>100</sup>

New York 1900 is remembered historically as a 'world' missionary conference; however one can argue that this is not accurate on a number of fronts. Firstly, when looking at who was represented by attendance, 'despite all efforts to be ecumenical and global, New York 1900 was a decidedly North American and Anglo event. Representation from the Southern Hemisphere was minimal. Of the thirty-two listed honorary vice presidents, one hailed from India, Koli Charan Banurji, and three from Germany.'<sup>101</sup> Secondly, representation was minimal when looking at those who were asked to speak: 'Delegates from the foreign fields were primarily Western, English-speaking missionaries. Non-Western nationals were few. Of 500 speakers,

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<sup>97</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 337. Although not one of the main leaders at New York 1900, Mott was in attendance as the General Secretary of the World's Student Christian Federation.

<sup>98</sup> Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 217

<sup>99</sup> Thomas A. Askew, 'The New York 1900 Ecumenical Missionary Conference: A Centennial Reflection' in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 24 (October 2000), p. 147.

<sup>100</sup> Rev. William R. Huntington, quoted in *New York 1900* Vol. 1, p. 10.

<sup>101</sup> Askew, 'The New York 1900 Ecumenical Missionary Conference: A Centennial Reflection', p. 147.

only eight came from the younger churches....<sup>102</sup> Lastly, while those from overseas were welcome, the size and scope of the conference reflected American culture and values: ‘America was enchanted with sheer bigness and here too foreign missions corresponded to the ethos of the land. The United States showed the world what dimensions a missionary conference could assume.’<sup>103</sup> This statement is confirmed when one reads the historical records of this conference:

The fact that there were usually several hundred people waiting to get into the hall indicated how thoroughly the people of New York were aroused. Those who stood in these crowds were of all classes, by far the larger number being people of education and refinement. It was a strange sight to see ladies and gentlemen, accustomed to occupy boxes in the opera season, waiting their turn in the crush and hastening to get a seat in the gallery at a missionary meeting.<sup>104</sup>

The distinctly American tone of the conference was set early. In keeping with the dominant mood of the time, ‘the identification of the missionary movement in the United States with a national sense of manifest destiny was symbolized by the following three consecutive speakers at the opening of the New York Missionary Conference: President William McKinley, New York governor Theodore Roosevelt and former President Benjamin Harrison.’<sup>105</sup> All three of these addresses reflect many of the same attitudes already discussed in Mott’s *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*; namely, the superiority of Western culture and thinking, combined with a profound sense of guilt on how white Euro-Americans had treated peoples from the global South in the past.<sup>106</sup>

In the opening address given by former President Benjamin Harrison, he discusses the growth of markets and how, if left to themselves, those who control markets will seek profit over the needs of people. He called on Christians to stand against this:

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<sup>102</sup> Askew, ‘The New York 1900 Ecumenical Missionary Conference: A Centennial Reflection’, p. 152. Although few in numbers, at least one of the speakers, Miss Lilavati Singh of India, made quite an impression: ‘It was after hearing Miss Singh’s address on the Results of Higher Education, of which she herself is an exponent, that General Harrison said: “If I had given a million dollars to foreign missions, I should have count it wisely invested if it led only to the conversion of that one woman.”’ *New York 1900*, Vol. 1, p. 47.

<sup>103</sup> Forman, ‘The Americans’, p. 54.

<sup>104</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, p. 25.

<sup>105</sup> Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, pp. 216-217.

<sup>106</sup> This dichotomy, namely a belief in the superiority of Western culture, religion, and civilization, combined with feelings of guilt for how non-Westerners had been treated in the past by white Euro-Americans, continued during this period. For more on this, see above pp. 12-14.

The gigantic engines that are driving forward a material development are being speeded as never before. It is to a generation thus intent – that has wrought wondrously in the realms of applied science – that God in His Word and by the preacher, says: All these are worthy only and in proportion as they contribute to the regeneration of mankind. Every invention, every work, every man, every nation, must one day come to this weighing platform and be appraised. To what other end is all this stir among men – this increase in knowledge? ...The first results seem to be the stimulation of a material production and a fierce struggle for markets. Cabinets, as well as trade chambers, are thinking of the world chiefly as a market-house, and of men as ‘producers’ and ‘consumers.’ We now seldom have wars of succession, or for mere political dominion. Places are strategic primarily from the commercial standpoint. Colonies are corner stalls in the world’s market-place. ...But with the increase of commerce and wealth the stress of social difficulties is not relieved, but increases in all of the great nations. The tendency is not to one brotherhood, but to many. Work for the willing, at a wage that will save the spirit as well as the body, is a problem of increasing tangle and intricacy. Competition forces economic devices and names wages that are, in some cases, insufficient to renew the strength expended. ...The highest conception that has ever entered the mind of man is that of God as the Father of all men – the one blood – the universal brotherhood.<sup>107</sup>

For Harrison, the answer lay in the extension of education. And while bringing a few nationals of other countries to study at American and European universities had a place, he was much more interested in the building of universities for ‘backwards’ people living in foreign lands: ‘It is a great work to increase the candle-power of our educational arc-lights, but to give to cave-dwellers an incandescent light may be a better one.’<sup>108</sup>

The address given by President William McKinley struck much the same chord, and he commended the missionaries present at the conference for helping to spread light and civilization:

[If] we are not our brothers’ keepers we can be our brothers’ helpers. The noble, self-effacing, willing ministers of peace and good-will should be classed with the world’s heroes. Wielding the sword of the Spirit, they have conquered ignorance and prejudice. They have been among the pioneers of civilization. They have illuminated the darkness of idolatry and superstition with the light of intelligence and truth. They have been messengers of righteousness and love. They have braved disease, and danger, and death, and in their exile have suffered unspeakable hardships, but their noble spirits have never wavered. ...They are placing in the hands of their brothers less fortunate than themselves the keys which unlock the treasuries of knowledge and open the mind to noble aspirations for better conditions. Education is one of the indispensable steps of mission enterprise, and in some form must proceed all

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<sup>107</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, p. 27.

<sup>108</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, p. 29.



successful work. ...Who can estimate their value to the progress of the nations? Their contribution to the onward and upward march of humanity is beyond all calculation. They have inculcated industry and taught the various trades. They have promoted concord and amity, and brought nations and races closer together. They have made men better.<sup>109</sup>

After the close of McKinley's speech, Mr. Morris K. Jesup, President of the New York Chamber of Commerce, 'happily proposed the singing of "My Country, 'Tis of Thee". The National anthem was sung by the whole audience, standing.'<sup>110</sup>

Finally, in the address given by Theodore Roosevelt, then governor of New York, he shared his experience of attending a missionary conference held on an Indian reservation. While he acknowledges the agency of the Indians he met in the advance of missionary work, he also stresses that this agency must be under American supervision:

[Out] there on the Indian reservations you see every grade of the struggle of the last 2,000 years repeated, from the painted heathen savage, looking out with unconquerable eyes from the reservations on which he is penned, held there only by the fear of the military power, thirsting still for the old, wild, lawless days of bloodshed and strife; from him through his nearest kinsfolk till you come to the Christian worker of a dusky skin, but as devoted to the work, as emphatically doing his duty as it was given to him or her to see it, as anyone here to-night. I saw a missionary gathering out on one of those reservations, just as much the same kind of gathering, not the same in grade but the same in kind, as that which is here to-night, and it was a gathering where ninety-nine per cent of the people were Indians; where the father and mother had come in a wagon with the ponies, with the lodge poles trailing behind them, over the prairie for a couple of hundred miles to attend this missionary conference: where they had their mothers' meetings, where all the practical details of missionary work were being carried out, and were being carried out by the Indians themselves – *helped, as was right, by the white missionaries*, but doing it mostly for themselves; subscribing from out of their little all they could that the work might go on among their brethren who yet were blind; devoting their means and devoting their efforts to it. It was a touching sight; a sight to look at and a sight to learn from [*italics mine*].<sup>111</sup>

Later in the same speech Roosevelt continues this theme, exhorting the missionaries to teach in a way that allows people to help themselves; however, he admits that this may take a few generations to accomplish:

You who work, you are teaching others to work. You are not trying to save people from having to exert their faculties which the Lord gave them. You are trying to teach them how to use them. In the long run, you can not carry any

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<sup>109</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, pp. 39-40.

<sup>110</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, p. 40.

<sup>111</sup> *New York 1900*, Vol. 1, p. 41.

one. You can help him to walk, and when you deal with the man who is ages behind us, it may be that your teaching him to walk must last for more than one or even two generations, but the aim must be in each case to teach the man to help himself. That is the kind of help that is best worth giving.<sup>112</sup>

All three speeches given have been quoted at length to show that, even from the secular political elite, there was an understanding of the importance of missions and missionaries in the spread of Western (and, from the three political leaders in attendance, specifically American) cultural and commercial interest. In all three of these speeches, there was an obvious and strong notion of the goodness of progress and of Western civilization. There was no hint or questioning of this progress because it was seen as inevitable, God-inspired, and, indeed, providential. The nations of Europe and North America were reaching maturity, and it was thus their responsibility to make sure, through efforts of aggressive humanitarianism, that the other nations and peoples were not left behind. That said, the destructive effects of unchecked market growth, trade, and economic expansion were also openly admitted. For the speakers, and for the vast majority in attendance, the answer lay in the ‘Christianization’ of the process: ‘It was a recognition that ... industrialism could not be avoided or impaired. Instead, its side-effects were to be held in check, “redeemed and enlightened” by what the Conference called “the pervading of the spirit of Christ.” Thus, ecumenical workers were to ensure that this industrial spirit was properly directed to become the champion of liberty, the handmaid of education, the auxiliary of the gospel.’<sup>113</sup>

While these themes, the goodness of Western progress as well as the West’s trusteeship over other less developed peoples, were dominant at the Conference, there were those who were more reformist and spoke a word of caution against this unchecked notion of progress and Westernization. When discussing Josiah Strong and the effects of his writings on mission thought, Rev. Henry T. Chapman, Secretary of the United Methodist Free Churches in Scotland, questioned the whole premise that the Anglo-Saxon race had evolved to a level higher than any others:

We hear again and again this statement: ‘Yes, the gospel is suited to the humanity of the West.’ In [Josiah Strong’s] book is worked out with great ability, the adaptation of the gospel to the Anglo-Saxon race. But then, there are China, India, Africa, and the Islands of the Sea. True, the gospel of Jesus

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<sup>112</sup> *New York 1900*, Vol. 1 p. 43.

<sup>113</sup> Efiog Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan: The Impact of African Questions on the Making of the Ecumenical Mission Mandates, 1900-1958* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1991), p. 17.

Christ has lifted the deepest needs of the Anglo-Saxon race; has brought to it its richest blessings, on the intellectual, the social, and the domestic side. The gospel of Jesus Christ is suited to the development of the genius of the Anglo-Saxon race. But there is India, with its rich imagination, its power of subtle thought, its love of all that is gorgeous, and grand, and spectacular. There is China, with its genius and idiosyncrasies. There is the African race with its rich fund of mirth. ...Why am I confident that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to India, to Africa, to China, and to the Islands of the Sea? *Not to make India, or China a pale, poor copy of the Anglo-Saxon*; but so to work in the thought and heart of India, China, and Africa, that they shall develop that special gift of thought and heart which God has wrought in their very texture, and that they shall partake of the Divine love at last, flashing back with other nations the goodness, and wisdom, and mercy, and love of God in Jesus Christ [*italics mine*].<sup>114</sup>

Another person that questioned the use of missions to expand empire and hegemony was Robert Speer (1867-1947), Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Speer feared that as missionaries focused on social, educational, and technical advances, the primary aim of missions was being lost:

I read in a missionary paper a little while ago that the foreign mission that was to accomplish results of permanent value must aim at the total reorganization of the whole social fabric. This is a mischievous doctrine. We learn nothing from ... the example of our Lord and His apostles to justify it. They did not aim directly at such an end. They were content to aim at implanting the life of Christ in the hearts of men, and were willing to leave the consequences to the care of God. It is a dangerous thing to charge ourselves openly before the world with the aim of reorganizing States and reconstructing society. ...I had rather plant one seed of the life of Christ under the crust of heathen life than cover that whole crust over with the veneer of our social habits or the vestiture of Western civilization.<sup>115</sup>

After issuing this warning, Speer went on to emphasize the proper nature of mission work as he saw it, calling on the names and policies of Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson a generation earlier:

We are to establish and foster native churches, self-extending, self-maintaining, self-directing, which shall carry out to their own people, whom we may not reach, the message that has come after them the blessings which we have given them as their own.... And this is our supreme aim. It is a just thing to challenge the world to sympathy with missions, because of the philanthropic and social results that missions achieve, and the heroic spirit which they display. *But our supreme aim is neither to establish republics or limited monarchies throughout the world, nor to lead Chinese or Hindoo*

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<sup>114</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, pp. 71-72

<sup>115</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, p. 75.

*people to wear our dress, or to remodel their social institutions where these are already wholesome and clean.* Our supreme aim is to make Jesus Christ known.... We must confess that we have lost sight, too often and too sadly, of the determining character of our mission aim.... When we lift off the shoulders of a new native church, for example, the burdens that it must bear, if it is ever to grow, we think we are dealing kindly, while we are taking its life and are false to our own supreme aim. We are here to do our own work, and not other people's work, or the work of other agencies or other forces [italics mine]<sup>116</sup>.

Of course, one of the obstacles to establishing World Christian agency was the issue of *finances*. Many missionaries and administrators used the terminology of three-selves policy, and so leaders of the growing World Christian churches expected a time to come when the reins would be turned over to them. As we have seen, however, there were always reasons not to turn over responsibility for growth and sustainability to Christians in these distant lands. So while the leaders of these new churches sought some degree of autonomy from foreign control, money continued to flow from Global Christian churches and missionaries continued to assert their right to control. In a discussion about these power dynamics (and the first time in which the use of the word 'partner' in relation to Global/World churches is made), Rev. T.S. Barbour, Secretary of the American Baptist Missionary Union, explained why the World Christian churches had no right, at this point, to demand partnership:

'Should the mission committee include natives, or consist of foreigners only?' is a question much debated today in some parts of the field. Intelligent members of the native churches raise the cry: 'No race distinctions! The same rights for the native pastor or professional as for the foreign!' To which the answer is made: 'Foreign administration for foreign funds.' Neither claim nor counterclaim seems to me to treat the question from just the right standpoint. On the one hand, the question is not one of 'rights,' whether of the foreigner or the native. The missionary has as little technical 'right' as any native Christian to a voice in local administration. The home churches which subscribe the funds are free to make through their home committee what arrangements they please for the expenditure of them. They are not obliged to institute a mission committee at all; they are not obliged to give this or that missionary a place on it; and they are certainly under no moral obligation to make the native church their *partner* in the administration than to invite the help of a neighboring missionary of another society. Rights and status the native Christian has, but they are in relation to the indigenous church and the administration of its funds: he can have none in relation to funds from a distant land that comes or cease to come quite independently of his volition or effort.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, pp. 77-78.

<sup>117</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, pp. 282-283.

While Barbour does say that leaders from the World churches should form part of any committees because of their knowledge of local customs and issues, it is missionaries who should hold most of the *authority*:

[Wise] policy will dictate that the missionary element on the committee shall always be strongly predominant, and this for two reasons, of which neither has any tinge of race prejudice. The first lies in the fact that the missionaries have been sent from the home country purposely to carry on the work of the society and manage its affairs, and so long as the administration of the stations is mainly in their hands, the administration of the mission should naturally be there too. A stronger reason ... is that, if missionary money is to be spent economically and with a due sense of responsibility, it must be administered, predominantly, by men who are in close touch with the contributing churches... The same reflection which warrants confidence in entrusting to native administrators the funds of the native church – namely the burden of raising the money is tied to the privilege of spending it, and the givers and spenders are in intimate touch with each other, indicates that a mission committee should mainly consist of missionaries, who, by religious association and spiritual instinct, are more closely identified than natives can possibly be, with the supporters of the society.<sup>118</sup>

A person who was not present at New York 1900 but who greatly affected the discussions in relation to the three-selves policy was John Livingston Nevius (1829-1893). Nevius was an American Presbyterian missionary who served in China from 1854 until his death in 1893. In 1886, Nevius published his principles for church growth, entitled *The Planting and Development of Missionary Churches*. Later, in 1890, Nevius was invited to Korea for two weeks to give instruction to seven missionaries new to overseas service.<sup>119</sup> After his visit and instruction, the Korean mission experienced considerable growth. Because of the success of his policies in Korea, he was able to influence a large number of new missionaries, especially those who were associated with the SVM: 'In the closing days of the nineteenth and the early days of the twentieth century, when the Student Volunteer Movement was at its height and hundreds of missionaries were leaving our shores, this booklet was used in mission study classes.'<sup>120</sup>

Nevius believed that most missionaries of his day were, at least in theory, trying to follow the policies of Anderson and Venn in establishing self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating churches. However, Nevius also understood

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<sup>118</sup> *New York 1900*, Vol.1, p. 283.

<sup>119</sup> Bruce F. Hunt, 'Preface to the Fourth Edition' in John L. Nevius, *The Planting and Development of Missionary Churches* (Hancock, New Hampshire: Monadnock Press, 2003), p.12.

<sup>120</sup> Hunt, 'Preface to the Fourth Edition', p. 12.

that that there was much contention as to the best methods to reach this end goal. He felt that the main issue that kept the World Christian churches dependent on Global Christianity, and kept them from growing organically in their own climate and setting, was that of money. He challenged what he called the 'old system', and compared it to a system which he said would be more successful:

These two systems (the Old System and the New System) may be distinguished in general by the former depending largely on paid native agency, while the latter depreciates and seeks to minimize such agency. Perhaps an equally correct and more generally acceptable statement of the difference would be that, while both alike seek ultimately the establishment of independent, self-reliant, and aggressive native churches, the Old System strives by the use of foreign funds to foster and stimulate the growth of the native churches in the first stage of their development, and then gradually to discontinue the use of such funds; while those who adopt the New System think that the desired object may be best attained by applying principles of independence and self-reliance from the beginning. The difference between these two theories may be more clearly seen in their outward practical working. The Old uses freely, and as far as practicable, the more advanced and intelligent of the native church members in the capacity of paid *colporteurs*, Bible agents, evangelists, or heads of stations; while the New proceeds on the assumption that the persons employed in these various capacities would be more useful in the end by being left in their original homes and employments.<sup>121</sup>

For Nevius, this new system did not rely on paid helpers, which could cause divisiveness in the community as well as perpetuate relationships of unequal power. Instead, he felt that missionaries should capacitate those around them to do for themselves, thus gaining confidence in their abilities to lead:

It is our aim that each man, woman, and child shall be both a learner from some one more advanced, and a teacher of some one less advanced. Theoretically, the missionary does nothing which the helper can do for him, and the helper does nothing which the leader can do, and the leader does nothing which he can devolve upon those under him. In this way much time is saved, the gifts of all are utilized and developed, and the station as an organized whole grows in knowledge, strength, and efficiency. The leader constantly superintends, directs, and examines those under him; the helper directs and examines the leaders and their stations; and the missionary in charge has a general supervision and control of the whole.<sup>122</sup>

By building up an indigenous leadership, Nevius believed that room would be created for each person in a church to build up their confidence and use their gifts, and

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<sup>121</sup> John Nevius, *The Planting and Development of Missionary Churches* (Hancock, New Hampshire: Monadnock Press, 2003), p. 18.

<sup>122</sup> Nevius, *The Planting and Development of Missionary Churches*, pp. 43-44.

ultimately, because they were not simply employees of the missionary, they would take ownership of the church themselves. According to Nevius,

[our] main dependence ... is on the honesty and integrity of the leaders and the church members, especially on the fact that the station is theirs and not the missionary's, and that they, rather than he, are the ones who are chiefly interested in correcting abuses. The fact that they do not depend upon the missionary for pecuniary support, which eliminates the strongest motives for concealment or deception, is a matter of much greater importance than the proximity or distance of the missionary.<sup>123</sup>

Nevius felt that this New system, although initially set in the specific context of Korea, could be duplicated in many situations. However, at New York 1900, his ideas and methods were a matter of serious debate.<sup>124</sup> An example of someone who wholeheartedly believed in his methods was Rev. H.G. Underwood of the Presbyterian Church (USA), who was one of the seven new missionaries in Korea which received the visit from Nevius. Underwood explained to those present at the conference how Nevius's methods were lived out in practice:

No evangelist or pastor is paid by foreign funds.... [The] real evangelistic work of carrying the gospel into new districts, we place on the shoulders of the native church. The cost of their churches and chapels, as well as their primary schools, is borne by the natives, and during the last few years we have asked the natives also to carry on the native church schools, although in the beginning of these schools assistance may be rendered to the extent of one-half their expenses.... The very fact that the burden of preaching the gospel is put upon the natives has given to us a church of earnest Christian workers who are fast carrying the gospel throughout the whole land. Today, out of 188 imperfectly organized Presbyterian churches, 186 are entirely self-supporting.<sup>125</sup>

Others, however, were not convinced, and attributed any success of the Nevius method to a combination of God's providence and historical circumstances. What was needed, it was argued, was well qualified paid help. Rev. Arthur H. Ewing, also of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and working in India, stated that

Dr. Nevius's success was a providence and not a method. The missionaries from Korea will excuse me for speaking of this, but I have at first hand and know it to be true, that in Korea, until the China-Japan War, there were about

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<sup>123</sup> Nevius, *The Planting and Development of Missionary Churches*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>124</sup> Only a few examples of the arguments of missionaries, both for and against the teachings of Nevius, are given here. For a more complete understanding of this issue, cf., Chapter XXXV 'Self-Support of Native Churches' in Edwin M. Bliss (ed), *Missionary Conference New York, 1900: Report of the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions, Held in Carnegie Hall and Neighboring Churches, April 21 to May 1* Vol. 2 (New York: American Tract Society, 1900), pp. 289-324; hereafter cited as *New York 1900* Vol.2.

<sup>125</sup> *New York 1900*, Vol. 2, p. 302.

eighty or one hundred Christians. After Japan defeated China by Western methods there was a great turning to the religion of the West, and the people were willing to come in; and now a method is being exploited there, as a reason of this success.... What we need above all else is that we should be able to send to every Christian community a man well qualified, and paid, if you please, by foreign funds, in order to instruct and maintain the people. Not that we do not also aim at self-support.... [The] question for constant discussion ... by Indian Christians is the question of self-support. They are stirred up over it; they will evolve its successful solution, but not by short-cut methods.<sup>126</sup>

In the end, there was no consensus among the participants. In any event, no one at this conference was asking World Christian leaders from any land their opinion on this issue, or what they thought was the best solution. Although the point of the conference was to eventually empower others, it was Global Christians, gathered together in one of America's great cities, who were attempting to come up with solutions for and without others.

In addition to these discussions about the best missionary policies when attempting to establish 'three-selves' churches, one is struck by the frank, albeit, few missionaries at New York 1900 who were already aware that the day of independence for World churches was well on its way, as well as those genuinely searching for ways to live out equality in these relationships. An American Baptist Missionary, Rev. John McLaurin, was confident that some of the World Christian churches were close to independence:

There is a power in India today, the significance of which few of us realize; I mean the native Christian church. This church, or these churches, are asking for freedom. In response to our demand for self-support, they ask self-government. If the Indian churches cut loose from the Western apron strings, and they will, how necessary that they should be robust, self-reliant, pure, and full of abounding spiritual life. The same condition of things obtains in Japan, and will in every land as the churches increase in membership and intelligence, and it is our business as wise master builders to mold them for our Lord.<sup>127</sup>

An unnamed missionary from the Methodist Episcopal Church shared that

[the] method adopted ... for the training of the native church in China may be described by the one great word equality – entire and absolute equality between the native ministers and the foreign missionaries.... This system of entire equality does produce two great effects: It tends to the training of a self-respecting ministry, because these men, having equal rights with us and not

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<sup>126</sup> *New York 1900*, Vol. 2, p. 308.

<sup>127</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 2, p. 275.



being in any sense whatever under our control, are not looked upon by others and do not look upon themselves as servants of the foreigners, than which nothing could be more unfortunate in the Christian Church in China. They are looked upon as equals of the foreigners. And then, again, it tends to produce a native ministry independent in thought and action, fearless in discussion. Therefore, the system that I speak of has proved efficient, and, as I say, it may be summed up on the one phrase – equality of rights, equality of privileges; and it has tended to produce what we all hope will come, a self-governing native church.<sup>128</sup>

An ABCFM missionary to Turkey spoke about the radical change in his feelings towards his indigenous colleagues once he built genuine relationships with them:

I traveled the way I was taught to do, that is, carrying a servant along with me, and not going into the pastors' families, but living separately wherever I was. But our home church made it impossible to do so any more – they took away the means – and now I think in that respect it was a great kindness.... You go there, you are four, five, six, or seven days with the pastor in his family, and the richness of the relation with the pastor, the results of it, the mutual love, and influence it has in the congregation, is so great that in no case would I go back to the old way.<sup>129</sup>

In the records of deliberations from this conference, however, these types of sentiments and the people who espoused them were too few to make much of a difference in the overall tone of the conference.

In all of these discussions about agency and money, it should be remembered that in many of the contexts in which missionaries found themselves, few were starting mission work or churches in new areas. Instead, most missionaries were being sent to areas where missions had long been established, and thus the patterns of *authority* and relationships between the missionaries and leaders from the emerging World church were set before their arrival. Whatever their intentions, these old patterns of relating to one another made partnership and any sense of equality almost impossible, although as we have seen, some did try. The Rev. W.W. Barr of the United Presbyterian Church of North America does the best at getting to the crux of the matter: '[It] is true that today the missionaries are convinced that they ought to be acting upon another principle, and that is the principle of self-support. The great difficulty, however, was to know how to get from the old position to the new.'<sup>130</sup>

As Dr. Gustav Warneck stated, '[the] nineteenth century is rightly called a mission century. As regards the number of mission workers, the total mission

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<sup>128</sup> Rev. G. B. Smyth, quoted in *New York 1900* Vol. 2, p. 283.

<sup>129</sup> Rev. S.S. Sanders, quoted in *New York 1900* Vol. 2, p. 260.

<sup>130</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 2, p. 320.

expenditure, the extent of mission enterprise, and the organization of mission activity, this century has no equal in former missionary periods.’<sup>131</sup> The Ecumenical Missionary Conference of 1900, at the end of this missionary century, reflected the prevailing mood of expansion, trusteeship and manifest destiny in Europe and, especially, in America. That said, the conference did bring together a large group of people, many of whom had traveled extensively and had relationships with nationals of other countries. Many of these were aware of the dangers of unchecked Western economic and cultural advance, and a few already seemed to understand the dangers inherent in the paternalism practiced by so many. As Robert Speer stated,

the conference asserted the missionary view of life and life’s possessions as not held by us as our own, to be used as we please or for our own ends, but to be regarded as trusts from God. We easily sink into a very tiny insularity. We call ourselves cosmopolitan, when we are as narrow as intelligent men can well be. Our own ends, our own community, our own nation, are the boundaries of our interests. We will think of the other side of the world if we can make money out of it, but not of ourselves as bound to it by any ties of high motive or duty. This Conference called that view anathema. It asserted that we can not if we will, cut ourselves asunder from our brothers of other races and other faiths.<sup>132</sup>

As the twentieth century began, positive movements began to be made toward international cooperation in mission which led to the first World Missionary Conference, held in Edinburgh in 1910. However, even as this positive movement gained momentum, it was still to be checked by the ideas and ideals of Manifest Destiny and trusteeship. This new period was to be a time of transition when old ways of thinking and relating were to be challenged as never before.

### 3.6 Tracing the Four Themes

During this era of trusteeship and ‘manifest destiny’, the issues of *humanitarianism* and *authority* were the most pronounced. As we have seen, beliefs concerning the evolution of societies were widespread among the general population, and within Global Christianity most understood this process to be providential and directed by God. These beliefs, in turn, had a significant influence on those involved in overseas mission. In the area of *humanitarianism*, most Global Christians saw the spread of empire and Western civilization as necessary. And while their right and

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<sup>131</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, p. 289.

<sup>132</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, p. 61.

duty to help others evolve was largely unquestioned, significant efforts were made to Christianize the process.

This also had obvious effects on the issue of *authority*. In line with the spirit of the age, missionaries worked against the expansion of World Christian agency. As more highly educated missionaries went overseas, they understood themselves to be in places and positions of power, controlling both the finances and mission committees of the World churches; in fact, at the Ecumenical Conference of Foreign Missions in 1900, one delegate stated unequivocally that the leaders of World Christianity were in no position to be partners.

However, because most Global Christians, both missionaries and their supporters, fully supported Western expansion and control, the issues of the *home base* as well as *rhetoric* and *reality* turn out not to be as significant in this era. Since most missionaries during this time were college educated, overseas mission began to be accepted and supported by a wider audience. Also, most of the *home base* had no problems disregarding the ideals of Anderson and Venn and fully supported mission as expansion. And because of this support, while noting a very few exceptions such as John Nevius, during this era there was virtually no *rhetoric* calling for equality or supporting the agency of World Christians. The *reality* was Global Christianity's almost complete belief in its right and duty to lead, control, and have power over the development of others.

## Chapter 4

### An Era ‘Between the Times’<sup>1</sup>

As the twentieth century dawned, the world was entering a time of great change for the countries of the West and the South. However, as the masses left the New York Ecumenical Conference in 1900, there were few reasons to believe that the Western dominance of the world would change any time soon. Africa and much of Asia were colonized and, although these lands and peoples were being used to provide cheap raw materials and labor, in the minds of most this was offset by the efforts being made by both colonial governments and missionaries to ‘uplift’ the peoples of the rest of the world. In the West, although there were signs of the war that was to come, few at the turn of the century believed that a large military conflict involving most of the nations of Europe was possible. The world was progressing along Western lines and would continue to improve, even if there were minor conflicts and issues along the way. Few read the signs of the times or could anticipate the tumultuous changes about to take place.

During this period, while all four themes are present we will see the issue of the *home base* become prominent as the leaders of Global Christian mission struggle to adapt to this ‘era between the time’ while also trying to convey these changes to their constituents. That said, the other issues we are tracing, namely *humanitarianism*, *authority*, and *rhetoric and reality*, will all be visible throughout this chapter.

#### 4.1 Signs of Change

At the turn of the century, most Westerners believed that the industrial and economic progress experienced in the nineteenth century would continue unabated. The world had been colonized and mapped out, new discoveries in transport and communications were being made, and it seemed as if the world’s best days lay ahead. According to Blainey,

[the] first years of the twentieth century formed a remarkable era of international handshaking. The world seemed to shrink.... From London or Liverpool it was possible to board fortnightly or monthly mail steamers bound for most major ports in the world. Long-distance railways united the remote corners of Europe.... North America was crossed by railways from coast to

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<sup>1</sup> The title ‘between the times’ comes from Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, p. 22. Yates refers to J.H. Oldham and his ‘almost uncanny prescience that Edinburgh was poised ‘between the times’ and that very great issues hung in the balance.

coast.... By 1900 even Africa and South America had long railways that eventually might meet and so form a transcontinental line.<sup>2</sup>

Incredible gains were also made in the ability to transmit and publish news and current events which ‘enabled newly literate people to know far more than their grandparents had known about events throughout the world. Here indeed was an information revolution, though that phrase had not yet been coined.’<sup>3</sup> Adding to the optimism of the time was that fact that, the American Civil War notwithstanding, the West had gone through a long period of relative peace. According to Hogg, ‘There were wars, but they were not the drawn out, widely ruinous kind of the preceding three centuries. From Napoleon’s downfall in 1815 until the outbreak of World War I in 1914 there had probably been no comparable period so free from war’s wide-spread devastation since the fourth century.’<sup>4</sup> As van Bulselaar notes, this era ‘was marked by two “signs” of global organization and global optimism: Pierre de Coubertin started the modern Olympic games (world peace through sports encounter) and Andrew Carnegie donated the funds required for the building of a Peace Palace at The Hague (world peace through negotiations and international law). Hope for international peace and fellowship was stronger than ever.’<sup>5</sup>

However, along side this shrinking world, information revolution, and relative peace, the countries of the West were also increasing their military expenditures:

That the world was becoming smaller did not mean that it was necessarily becoming friendlier. More nations imposed tariffs on foreign goods, and the ideology of free trade was fading. Armies and navies were receiving more of a nation’s budget. Nonetheless, ... [most] Europeans who thought about the state of the world in 1900 considered that they were fortunate. They had lived – even if they were aged eighty – through a period that was relatively peaceful inside the great nations. Moreover most thought that the peace would persist.<sup>6</sup>

Hogg agrees with this optimistic assertion, stating that, on the whole, the positivism and activism seen in the late nineteenth century carried over to the first decade of the twentieth:

For Western Europeans and Americans the nineteenth century had been one of hopeful optimism. The Industrial Revolution and Western European expansion had brought great material wealth. The appeal of the scientific

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<sup>2</sup> Geoffrey Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Publishers, 2005), p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p. 33.

<sup>4</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 99.

<sup>5</sup> Jan van Bulselaar, ‘Thinking Locally, Acting Globally: The Ecumenical Movement in the New Era’, *International Review of Mission* 81 (July 1992), p. 364.

<sup>6</sup> Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, pp. 34-35.

method tantalized human minds with the thought of unlimited knowledge and achievement. Evolution from lower to higher forms, so apparent in nature, was thought to apply to history and human society. Naturally, belief arose in mankind's inevitable progress. All this encouraged a frame of mind designated 'the white man's burden' – an obligation assumed to rest upon European peoples to give their higher civilization to benighted races.<sup>7</sup>

On the global front, because of this 'white man's burden', the West was still seeking to shape and influence the direction and growth of peoples in the South. While a very few were questioning this imposition<sup>8</sup>, most Westerners welcomed this advance, 'believing that it could bring peace to warring peoples and ... the establishment of justice for those who were too weak to secure it for themselves.'<sup>9</sup> Neill goes on to state, however, that those on the receiving end were conflicted as to whether they were being helped or hurt by the process of Westernization:

Nationals were sorely perplexed. Many of them welcomed the West because of certain good things that it could give to their peoples. But often they recognized that the West was both deliverer and destroyer, and that therefore the white man was necessarily both friend and foe. Converts were usually from the classes that gained the most from the advent of the West, and therefore for them the sense of deliverance was particularly strong. But it was quite certain that, if one day they should awaken from the sleep of acquiescence, the missionary too would come to be regarded as both friend and foe. And all the time the wisest spirits had seen that this period of the greatness of the West could not be more than temporary, and that in the end a heavy price might have to be paid for alliances based on something other than obedience to the word of God.<sup>10</sup>

For those waiting for the end of this period of Western dominance, the first small sign was Japan's defeat of Russia in 1905, the first defeat of a European nation by an Asian nation in modern times. According to Neill, this event was not seen as especially significant by those in the West. However, 'minds moved otherwise in Asia. News of the Japanese victories reverberated round the continent and were hailed with the excited astonishment of novelty. Today Japan and Russia; tomorrow, perhaps ... but the sentence was generally left unconcluded.'<sup>11</sup> And while it may be

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<sup>7</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 99.

<sup>8</sup> One example is the American novelist Mark Twain, who 'watched the United States and other Western countries go about the world and wrote in the New York *Harold* as the century began: "I bring you the stately matron named Christendom, returning bedraggled, besmirched, and dishonored from pirate raids in Kiao-Chou, Manchuria, South Africa, and the Philippines, with her soul full of meanness, her pocket full of boodle, and her mouth full of pious hypocrisies.'" Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*, p. 321.

<sup>9</sup> Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, (London: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 415.

<sup>10</sup> Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, p. 415.

<sup>11</sup> Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, p. 415.

that many in the West did not pay significant attention to this event, when one reads Gairdner's official account of the Edinburgh Conference (1910), one gets a sense that some, at least, were beginning to see the coming of changes in power and relationships, both in the political and ecclesiological spheres:

The little Island Kingdom, which alone had never seemed quite to fit into the former world-scheme; which, in the war with China in 1894 and the Relief of the Legations in 1900, had made Europe feel that there was one element in far-eastern politics that was proof against absorption; that little Island Kingdom emerged victorious from a decisive struggle with a western Power, and in so doing upset settled views based on the records of tens of centuries. The tide of western advance and domination, which had seemed more like an unchangeable phenomenon of nature than a resultant of human actions and states, was checked, rolled suddenly back.<sup>12</sup>

It was into this new and subtly changing world context that the World Ecumenical Conference in Edinburgh took place.

#### 4.2 The World Missionary Conference – Edinburgh 1910

The World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh, from June 14 to 23, 1900, is considered by historians as a pivotal and monumental missionary gathering.<sup>13</sup> According to Utuk, '[if] the nineteenth-century Comity Conferences were but bumps, New York 1900, a noticeable tremor, Edinburgh 1910, was the earthquake that necessitated and triggered the birth and nurture of ecumenicism and full commitment to espousing acceptable mission mandates in a rapidly changing world.'<sup>14</sup> Hutchison agrees: 'The World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910 seemed a landmark event, at the time, to participants and to most observers. But later generations ... used a different metaphor: "watershed."'<sup>15</sup> Neill also agrees and credits the 1910 meeting with being the catalyst for much of the ecumenical cooperation that took place over the next few decades:

The World Missionary Conference ... is the starting-point of the modern ecumenical movement in all its forms. It was here that Charles Henry Brent, Missionary Bishop to the Philippines, saw the vision which led directly to the Faith and Order Movement and to the first World Conference on Faith and Order held at Lausanne in 1927. The parallel movement, known as Life and

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<sup>12</sup> W.H.T. Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier, 1910), p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> For a current and comprehensive historical evaluation on the significance of the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, see Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009).

<sup>14</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 34.

<sup>15</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 125.

Work, which held its first great conference at Stockholm in 1925, while arising less directly out of Edinburgh 1910, had many connections with it both in thought and in membership.<sup>16</sup>

There is no question that, historically, Edinburgh 1910 was a step forward for the ecumenical movement and world missionary cooperation. It was also a small, albeit significant step, for the growing of new kinds of relationships between the Global Christian and World Christian churches.

As delegates and visitors left the World Ecumenical Conference in New York (1900), no provisions had been made for a next world meeting. However, according to Hogg, '[in] the minds of responsible missionary leaders ... the idea of a general, decennial, missionary assembly commended itself. London, 1888, was thought of as being the first great conference. New York, 1900, was regarded as the second. Naturally, then, suggestions for a "Third Ecumenical Conference" arose almost simultaneously in the United States, in Germany, and in Scotland.'<sup>17</sup> Even though there was strong support for another conference, according to Robson,

[the] initiation of action seemed almost accidental. Early in 1906, the Rev. J. Fairley Daly, Honorary Secretary of the Livingstonia Mission of the United Free Church of Scotland, writing about another matter to Mr. Robert Speer, Secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions in New York, asked incidentally whether the Mission Boards of America had any plans as to the holding of another Conference. This letter Mr. Speer submitted at the next stated meeting of the secretaries of the Mission Boards in America, and was instructed to reply that they would heartily welcome the holding of a Missionary Conference in Great Britain in 1910.<sup>18</sup>

Following this exchange, representatives from seven Scottish mission societies met in January 1907, and agreed to host a conference in Edinburgh in 1910.

Those charged with planning the Edinburgh Conference at first envisioned a gathering very similar in style and content to what had taken place in New York; in short, a large meeting of official delegates but also open to the public, demonstrating missionary progress, might, and successes. However, 'it soon became clear that the whole plan of the Conference demanded most serious consideration, if the opportunity was to be seized for rendering an effective service to the cause of missions.'<sup>19</sup> Hogg

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<sup>16</sup> Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, p. 410.

<sup>17</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 102.

<sup>18</sup> George Robson, 'History of the Conference' in *World Missionary Conference, 1910 vol. 9: The History and Records of the Conference Together with Addresses Delivered at the Evening Meetings* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier, 1910), pp.6-7; hereafter cited as *Edinburgh 1910 vol.9*.

<sup>19</sup> Robson, 'History of the Conference', p. 7.



lists two factors as to why those charged with planning this conference felt it necessary to change its make-up and focus. First, external to the church, Hogg points to the

[enormous] political changes were everywhere seen. China's Boxer Rebellion was being fought when Protestantism's missionaries had met last in New York. In that land, too, the Manchu Dynasty was on the verge of collapse, presaging Sun Yat-sen's Revolution of 1911. Japan in 1904 had defeated Russia, the first Eastern nation to overcome a Western power. All over the East and Near East, particularly in Turkey, nationalism was stirring. In many areas Islam was pressing ahead relentlessly. Some were asking whether Africa would become Moslem or Christian. The new flowering tides in the world were racial, national, economic, and social.<sup>20</sup>

Second, he lists ecclesiastical factors that effected these decisions:

The Protestant missionary enterprise had entered its second century. A 'native church' had been planted. It was growing rapidly and required wise adjustments. To some it seemed clear that missions were entering a different era, that only broad-scale study, planning, and consultation could clarify the transition within the movement and in the shifting currents of the then contemporary world.<sup>21</sup>

For Edinburgh to be a working conference as opposed to a demonstration, there were a number of issues to consider. The first, and one that was substantively different from prior missions conferences, was the question as to who would attend. At the conferences at London (1888) and New York (1900),

representatives had been appointed by various missionary organizations, but they were also open to any who might care to come. Indeed, the sponsors of the Ecumenical Missionary Conference of 1900 had rejoiced that thousands had been in attendance. By contrast, the membership of the Edinburgh Conference was limited to those delegated by their respective organizations.... Only societies which actually had missionaries at work abroad were eligible, and representation was in proportion to the share of each in the missionary enterprise, as measured in financial giving.<sup>22</sup>

The second consideration was the type of conference to be held. As Robson writes,

[the] Conferences of 1888 and 1900 had been chiefly great missionary demonstrations fitted to inform, educate, and impress. It was felt, however, that the time had now come for a more earnest study of the missionary enterprise, and that without neglecting the popular demonstrational uses of

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<sup>20</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 104.

<sup>21</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 104.

<sup>22</sup> Kenneth Scott Latourette, 'Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council' in Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill (eds.) *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948*, Vol. 1 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), p. 357.

such a gathering, the first aim should be to make the Conference as far as possible a consultative assembly.<sup>23</sup>

Finally, it was recognized that those societies invited to attend would represent many different backgrounds and faith traditions, and there was the need to protect each group and person from attack on issues of doctrine or polity. It was agreed that 'no expression of opinion should be sought from the Conference on any matter involving any ecclesiastical or doctrinal question on which those taking part in the Conference differed among themselves.'<sup>24</sup> By providing this safeguard, all who were invited, from high-church Anglicans to low-church Congregationalist, could attend with the knowledge that the discussions would focus on missionary methods and not issues that many considered secondary and which, if allowed, could have been extremely divisive.

In 1908, John Mott and George Robson met together at Oxford to decide on the subjects that would be studied, and commissions were formed for the study of each: 'It was agreed that each Commission should consist of twenty members, and that the Chairman of each Commission should guide its procedures and have the final decision of all questions that might arise.'<sup>25</sup> Each commission was responsible for making a list of questions pertaining to their particular subject, and

for two years prior to 1910, elaborate questionnaires were sent out by a Joint Missionary Committee to missionaries overseas and other persons with the requisite experience. The replies were carefully studied and collated by joint groups of suitable persons and set out in Reports under eight Commissions as follows:

- |            |       |                                      |
|------------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| Commission | I.    | Carrying the Gospel                  |
|            | II.   | The Church in the Mission Field      |
|            | III.  | Christian Education                  |
|            | IV.   | The Missionary Message               |
|            | V.    | Preparation of Missionaries          |
|            | VI.   | The Home Base                        |
|            | VII.  | Missions and Government              |
|            | VIII. | Co-operation and Unity <sup>26</sup> |

By organizing and focusing on specific subjects, as well as limiting the participation to official delegates, Edinburgh became 'no longer a local demonstration but an

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<sup>23</sup> Robson, 'History of the Conference', p. 8.

<sup>24</sup> Robson, 'History of the Conference', p. 8.

<sup>25</sup> Robson, 'History of the Conference', p.10.

<sup>26</sup> Harry Sawyerr, 'The First World Missionary Conference: Edinburgh 1910', *International Review of Mission* 67 (July 1978), p. 257.

international school of mission study and counsel.’<sup>27</sup> Organized along these lines, ‘[the] Edinburgh Conference ... made possible consultation through which the missionary agencies could plan together the next steps in giving the Gospel to the world.’<sup>28</sup>

Although the substance and organization of Edinburgh were very different from previous missionary conferences, the opening ceremonies were strikingly similar to New York in the place and honor given to political guests and speeches. First, Lord Balfour of Burleigh gave an address in which he read a letter of greeting from King George V, who had just become monarch a month before when his father, King Edward VII, died. In the letter, the King wrote that ‘he appreciates the supreme importance of this work in its bearings upon the cementing of international friendship, the cause of peace, and the well-being of mankind.’<sup>29</sup> At the conclusion of Lord Balfour’s reading of the letter, ‘[with] a single accord and impulse, the whole Conference, monarchists and republicans alike, sang God Save the King.’<sup>30</sup> After reading the King’s letter, Lord Balfour continued to address those gathered and spoke about the importance of Christianity, especially in light of the political changes in Asia:

Nations in the East are awakening. They are looking for two things: they are looking for enlightenment and for liberty. Christianity alone of all religions meets these demands in the highest degree. There cannot be Christianity without liberty, and liberty without at least the restraint of Christian ideals is full of danger.<sup>31</sup>

As he was not personally able to attend, a letter from President Theodore Roosevelt was also read. In it Roosevelt called on missionaries and mission societies to continue to work even though the desired goal seemed distant:

An infinite amount of work remains to be done before we can regard ourselves as being even within measurable distance of the desired goal; an infinite amount at home in the dark places which too often closely surround the brightest centres of life, an infinite amount in those dark places of the earth where blackness is as yet unrelieved by any light. When such is the high purpose to which you have dedicated yourselves it is eminently fitting that your invitation should have gone to all Christian Churches in all lands.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Robson, ‘History of the Conference’, p. 9.

<sup>28</sup> Latourette, ‘Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council’, p. 358.

<sup>29</sup> Robson, ‘History of the Conference’, p.141.

<sup>30</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, p. 39.

<sup>31</sup> Robson, ‘History of the Conference’, p. 145.

<sup>32</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, p. 46.

Although Roosevelt did mention that darkness exists in the lands of Global Christianity, they were still differentiated from those places where ‘blackness is as yet unrelieved’. It is also interesting that this invitation to ‘all Christian Churches in all lands’ was not actually a call to all churches, but simply a call for Westerners representing their mission societies to gather together to map out strategies for and without others. Although one can sense a subtle shift in how Westerners were beginning to picture the non-Western world, the idea and ideals of Manifest Destiny and trusteeship were still very much alive at Edinburgh.

A number of important issues pertaining to the relationships between Global Christian and World Christian churches came up for discussion at Edinburgh. One of these topics was the realization by those present that the churches in traditionally non-Christian lands were showing signs of dramatic growth. On the second day of the conference, the topic of discussion was ‘The Church in the Mission Field.’ The subjects on the agenda included the constitution and organization of the church, church discipline, and the training and employment of workers. When reading the historical record of the discussion that day, it becomes apparent that delegates looked at the changing world around them, including the growth of World Christianity, and saw that changes in these relationships were beginning to become evident, whether anyone was willing to acknowledge it or not:

The public is not ... aware that there is such a thing as ‘the Church on the Mission Field.’ The man in the street, sure of everything, is sure there is not. Even the statesmen whose business it is to be conversant with foreign affairs, has probably overlooked it. They are hardly to be blamed. There is another who apparently has had some difficulty in fully realising its existence – the missionary. With *him* it has been as with one who has striven long and intensely, after some great object dearly desired, hardly hoped for; and then, when it comes to him, cannot see that it has come.<sup>33</sup>

This public acknowledgement, that the World churches were in fact churches in their own right, was accompanied by another new insight: that the designations of ‘younger’ and ‘older’ or ‘receiving’ and ‘sending’, so easily used for decades, were starting to become more inexact and problematic:

It should be remembered ... that our use of the phrase ‘mission field’ is inexact. The whole world is the mission field, and there is no Church that is not a Church in the mission field. Some Christian communities are younger and some are older, but that is all the difference. All alike are companies of

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<sup>33</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, p. 93.

redeemed souls who have passed from death into life, and who, amid the perils and temptations of a world not yet ‘brought under,’ are seeking to cherish the new life and to perfect its fruits. The Commission has perforce accepted the popular but inexact usage of calling only those regions ‘the mission field’ where the Church has been more recently planted, and where its history falls, roughly speaking, within the last two centuries.<sup>34</sup>

These are two very important admissions on the part of the Edinburgh delegates. Up until this time, the World churches were thought of and treated as babes, needing all (or at least most) direction and sustenance from the churches of Global Christianity. It was now admitted that many of these churches were entering, if not maturity, at least adolescence, and as such needed to begin to experience more freedom and autonomy. The admission that the ‘whole world is the mission field’ was also new, and would begin to slowly demand a change in the way Global church leaders saw the rest of the world.<sup>35</sup> To bring these points home, a geographical survey was shared with the delegates reflecting the number of countries in which one could find Christian churches worshipped each Sunday:

It is inspiring to reflect how the younger Christian communities make good the lack of service of the older, and the older join with the younger, so that throughout the Lord’s Day, from the rising of the sun to the going down of it, incense and a pure offering ascends unceasingly to God, land answering to land as each in turn takes up the chorus. So under God’s ordinances of day and night it has already come to pass that not for one day only, as we commonly say, but for more than thirty-six hours every week ‘The Holy Church throughout all the world’ keeps her sacred watch in solemn commemoration of the Resurrection of her Lord.<sup>36</sup>

Another issue that was discussed was the forming of ‘three-selves’ churches, which even after many years of discussion and efforts at implementation continued to be problematic. Edinburgh began this discussion by admitting that, because of the

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<sup>34</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission II, The Church in the Mission Field* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), p. 4.

<sup>35</sup> While missionary leaders from Global Christianity would begin to recognize this fact, the general membership of the Global churches, the *home base* of missions, was not enthusiastic in embracing this new view of the World Christian churches and their development: ‘[The] state of the Church [affects] the direct and vital connection subsisting between the performance of the work and the quality and fullness of its own spiritual life. ...[It] is a work imposed upon the whole membership of the Church, and, as the direct effort of the Church to fulfill the great task committed to her, it demands the consecration of all the available energies and resources of the Church in order to its accomplishment. But the Church today is very far from such a conception of its relation to the work of evangelizing the world.... The life of the Church suffers from lack of clear conviction and of resolute loyalty to Christ throughout the whole sphere of duty. While the missionary obligation of the Church may be formally acknowledged, it is viewed with widespread apathy and indifference.’ *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission I: To Consider Missionary Problems in Relation to the Non-Christian World* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), pp. 347-348.

<sup>36</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission II*, pp. 9-10.

various polities found within Global Christianity, even defining what constituted a three-selves church was quite contentious:

So varying are the senses attached to 'Church,' 'self-government,' 'self-support,' and many other words, that men accustomed to different usages, even when reporting each in his own customary terms on the same facts, would be likely to make apparently contradictory statements. For example, a bishop speaking of a province of the Anglican Communion says there is one all-inclusive, self-governing Church there with its ten dioceses; while a Baptist or Congregationalist dealing with the same facts would naturally speak of churches by the score, and not one of them 'self-governing.' ... One view instinctively excludes, as the other includes, foreign missionary agency.<sup>37</sup>

Because this line of discussion involved issues of church polity, compromise language was found so that each Global church or society could affirm the end goal of three-selves churches, while leaving open the interpretation of what, exactly, in practice this meant. It was agreed that

it is abundantly clear ... everything possible must be done to lead the Christians of every congregation to self-government, so far as the congregation as such carries authority; to self-support, in a sense that precludes any idea of permanent or normal dependence on any other people than themselves; to self-extension, not only to the bounds of their own habitation, but also out into the unevangelised world, wheresoever it may be practically within their reach.<sup>38</sup>

While this compromise seemed perfectly reasonable (especially since issues of polity and theology could not be discussed), it changed little in the way that each society put the 'three-selves' goal into practice. These issues would continue to be problematic, especially in the light of growing nationalism in the South.

Another issue that was raised at Edinburgh was the growing interest, both from missionaries as well as members of World Christianity, for the need of closer communion with each other:

...[The] supreme object of the missionary enterprise is to plant in non-Christian countries the Church of Jesus Christ. With the growth of this Church there arise problems of a new kind. It is natural that the converts of each Mission should be instructed in the doctrines, and organised according to the polity, of the Church to which that Mission owes its origin. As separate Christian communities, however, thus begin to grow up in a non-Christian country, the question presents itself whether these communities shall *be allowed* to remain isolated and distinct, or whether it is not the aim of all

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<sup>37</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission II*, p. 29.

<sup>38</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission II*, p. 31.

missionary work to plant in each non-Christian nation one undivided Church of Christ [*italics mine*].<sup>39</sup>

It also was recognized that, although some missionaries were encouraging this move, much of the impetus was coming from the World Christian churches themselves, who did not always understand the ecclesial divisions that had been exported from the churches of Global Christianity:

Not only is the ideal of a united Church taking more and more definite shape and colour in the minds of foreign missionaries at work in non-Christian lands, but it is also beginning under the influence of the growing national consciousness in some of these countries to capture the imagination of the indigenous Christian communities, for whom the sense of a common national life and a common Christianity is stronger than the appreciation of differences which had their origin in controversies remote from the circumstances of the Church in mission lands.<sup>40</sup>

Missionaries at Edinburgh were warned that this issue of church unity was very real and that if the missionaries did not assist in this process it would, to a large extent, be accomplished by these new Christians communities without outside guidance. The missionaries were encouraged to use their understanding of church history and lessons learned from previous struggles to assist the World Christian churches in this effort and to keep them connected to the church universal:

...[In] some mission fields ... the problem of unity may, before long, be settled, or at any rate taken in hand, by the indigenous Churches independently of the wishes and views of the western missionaries. It may be contended that this is just as it should be, and that the question is one which the Christian people in each country must be left to determine for themselves. But this view takes no account either of the strength of the spiritual ties which unite the Christian communities in the mission field with the western Churches, of which they are the offspring, or of the significance and lessons of the long history of Christianity.... We cannot think that the struggles and aspirations of the past centuries, and the experience won at such cost, count for nothing, and are without any teaching or message for the present. In the supreme work of laying the foundations of a national Church in the great countries of the East, it is impossible that missionaries should refrain from giving to the indigenous Churches such help and counsel as they can from the wider and richer experience that is part of their inheritance from the past.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission VIII, Co-operation and the Promotion of Unity*, p. 83. It is interesting that, at a time when the existence of growing World Christianity was being celebrated, language of control was still being used. This truly was an era 'between the times' and one can see that, although the delegates were trying to plan for the future of growing, independent World churches, many of the older modes of thinking, as well as the use of pejorative language, were still quite common.

<sup>40</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission VIII*, p. 84.

<sup>41</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission VIII*, pp. 86-87.

The Commission VIII report on ‘Co-operation and the Promotion of Unity’ listed two distinct ways in which church unity could be experienced. The first was the actual union or amalgamation of two or more churches into one. This method endeavored ‘to combine, in a close and organic union, Churches which have similar antecedents or share a common polity.’<sup>42</sup> The second method was that of forming federations ‘of Christian bodies which regard organic union as impracticable or undesirable. The attempt to secure federation of this kind is promoted partly by the feeling that, even if complete amalgamation cannot be more than a distant ideal, closer relations than exist at present are desirable.’<sup>43</sup> Whichever method used, the goal of most was to ultimately form national churches in each country. Although this process was still some time off in Africa, the visit of John Mott to Asia in 1912-13 on behalf of the Continuation Committee, to be discussed in the next section, did much to expedite the formation of national churches in countries of the East.

As these issues of church union and federation continued to come to the fore, a problem was presented to the delegates of the Global Christian churches; namely, how these movements would affect the relationships between the missions and the new churches of World Christianity:

This problem, already pressing in some fields, and of intense interest, is that of the right of adjustment of co-operation between the Church in the field and the Mission which remains within its borders. The very enunciation of the problem indicates an advanced stage of organisation. The Church in the mission field has become the *predominant partner*. The Mission has to adjust itself to the new position, has to take the place of handmaid where once it carried chief authority [italics mine].<sup>44</sup>

Up until this conference, whenever the relationship between Global and World Christian churches was discussed, it was always from the point of view of the missionaries, the mission societies, and the Global churches. However, because of this growing reality and the call, in the affirmative, that a relationship of partners needed to exist, this Commission suggested that from Edinburgh forward, the discussion needed to center on the World churches, their growth, and what this meant for international Christianity:

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<sup>42</sup> *World Missionary Conference 1910: Report of Commission VIII*, p. 87. The full report of the Commission on this method can be found on pages 88-107.

<sup>43</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission VIII*, p. 107. The full report of the Commission on method can be found on pages 107-115.

<sup>44</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission II*, pp. 35-36.



...[An] organised Church in the Mission Field is no longer only a distant ideal, but is now clearly in view as an actual Church in being. In our enquiries and our Report we have dealt chiefly with the opportunities, functions, and duties of the foreign missionary. But the broad result shows that the Church on which we report may justly claim continuous recognition from us of its organised existence, of its corporate life and action, of its needs and problems, and of its stable and effective influence upon its own members and upon the non-Christian peoples among whom it has taken root.... [Everything] must now be looked at as from within the young and growing Church itself, and no longer mainly from the standpoint of the missionary, or of the Home Church.<sup>45</sup>

At this point in the narrative, it is important to pause briefly and discuss this shift in language, for it is vital in understanding the origins of ecumenical partnerships. Both Funkschmidt and Bauerochse write that when the term partnership was first introduced, it was part of British colonial debates and was used simply as an extension of the concept of trusteeship.<sup>46</sup> Funkschmidt states that during this time and later, especially following World War I, the term ‘partnership’ ‘found its way into ecumenical thinking from its origin in the business world (“business partners”), when the British wanted to keep control while granting some autonomy, and coined the term “partnership” to describe this new relationship.’<sup>47</sup> Bauerochse also notes that ‘[as] early as 1905, the term “partnership” was first used in this context.’<sup>48</sup> There is no doubt that these assertions are, in the main, true. As we will see, in discussions at Edinburgh as well as later conferences, partnership was used within the ecumenical movement as a way of granting some autonomy to the World churches while ultimately allowing the Global churches to maintain power.

However, while the term may have been borrowed from the colonial discourse, when used by some within the ecumenical movement it was also infused with an alternate meaning, describing relationships of mutuality between fully autonomous churches. As one can see above, what some delegates at Edinburgh were calling for was an ‘adjustment of co-operation’ so that the World churches could become ‘the *predominant partner*.’ In this light, Edinburgh stated that ‘the Mission has to adjust itself to the new position, has to take the place of handmaid where once it carried chief authority’, and that now ‘everything must ... be looked at as from

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<sup>45</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission II*, p. 38.

<sup>46</sup> As we will see in chapter six, this idea was further refined following World War II, on the eve of decolonization (see below, pp. 219-220).

<sup>47</sup> Funkschmidt, ‘New Models of Mission Relationship and Partnership’, p. 558.

<sup>48</sup> Bauerochse, *Learning to Live Together*, p. 90.

within the young and growing Church itself, and no longer mainly from the standpoint of the missionary, or of the Home Church.’

It is important to note that what some at Edinburgh were calling for was quite different than simply an updated version of trusteeship. This shift in language signified a complete reorientation of focus and perspective from previous conferences and an acknowledgement that the growth and maturation of the World Christian churches was calling for radically different relationships. It is therefore argued here that this tension in the understanding and use of partnership has existed from the beginning of its use in ecumenical discussions and can be seen in the deliberations of Edinburgh and after. While partnership could be used as a strategy for maintaining hegemony, at others times it was used to signal the need for new relationships of, if not equality, at least respect and mutuality. It should also be noted that it is quite amazing, in a conference dominated by a colonial world view and attended almost exclusively by delegates from Global Christianity, that insights such as these could be reached.

Another important issue that was discussed was the role of Western civilization and how missionaries and societies should respond to its effects. Seth Low, then Chairman of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, spoke on ‘The Duty of Christian Nations’ and stressed that the attitudes and actions of Western governments greatly effected, for good or ill, the work of missionaries. Low said that

whenever the Government of a country whose public opinion is predominantly Christian illustrates in its dealings with non-Christian races, and generally in its international relationships, high ideals of justice, of fair dealing, and of respect for the rights of others, even when they are weak, the cause of the missionary is powerfully reinforced. On the other hand, when the Government of a country whose public opinion is predominantly Christian fails to illustrate such ideals, the work of a missionary is made infinitely more difficult.<sup>49</sup>

In reading the rising tide of nationalism in Asia, he also noted that the countries of the world must find ways to live together:

India, China, and Japan – for ... two thousand years have developed a civilization of their own, different socially, different politically, different religiously; and now, all of a sudden ... the East and West find themselves, I will not say looking into each other’s eyes, but actually obliged to commingle. For two thousand years, one may say, they have lived apart as if there were

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<sup>49</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records of the Conference together with Addresses Delivered at the Evening Meetings* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier, 1910), pp. 278-279.

two worlds. For all the future, so far as man can see, they have got to live together in the same world.<sup>50</sup>

The Archbishop of York, C.G. Lang, also spoke on the same subject. He conceded that while western expansion was inevitable and unstoppable, it was the duty of Christian nations to make sure that the process of ‘civilizing’ worked for the good of people, and not their destruction: ‘Without the spirit of Christian missions, the instinct of expansion must inevitably go wrong. We cannot check that instinct; it is part of a great world movement. It is rather for us to use it and ennoble it; but, left to itself, it inevitably degrades both the people who are conscious of it and the people whom it reaches.’<sup>51</sup> In a rather lengthy passage from his speech, Lang also acknowledges that while the aim of Western countries is to make a profit, this striving must not come at the expense of the others:

[It] is the duty of Christian nations to make the aim of their policy, not only their own advantage, but the good of the non-Christian races whom they rule, or with whom they come into contact. The history of the treatment of non-Christian races by professedly Christian races is one long illustration of the difficulty which human nature finds in its national policy to be true to this primary Christian law. We need not be surprised. The very instinct which leads Christian nations into contact with non-Christian races is itself necessarily independent of the Christian law. The instinct is not the good of the nations, but the pursuit of wealth. The first instinct which brings a Christian nation into contact with a non-Christian race is the desire to secure or open out markets for its trade.... [We] must also admit that their primary motive must always be a return for their own investments and the progress of their own trade and commerce. It is natural, it is almost inevitable that Governments at home, pressed by the economic conditions which they have to consider, should be keen to follow up the trader in the opening and securing of new markets in the world. It is also almost inevitable that they should follow in the wake, not only of the journeys, but of the motives of the trader. The trader, the company, the corporation, are always at the ear of Governments, which have the most obvious motives of interest to listen to them, and to further them. And what is of fundamental importance in the life of a Christian nation is this, that there should be also at the ear of Governments a counter acting influence acknowledging a higher law, insisting upon moral ideals as well as upon material advantages. In other words, a Christian nation cannot be true to the fundamental principles of Christian policy unless there is always a strong and active body of Christian public opinion, insisting that no native race shall be exploited merely for the benefit of trade and commerce.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 281.

<sup>51</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 275.

<sup>52</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 273.

Lang concludes his remarks by admonishing the nations of the West to act according to Christian principles, stating that those present at Edinburgh, as well as the churches they represent, should declare this unequivocally: 'I think one of the messages of this Conference to Christian nations is the simple one, the direct one, the necessary one – see to it that your own nations are being made and kept Christian.'<sup>53</sup>

While much of what has been said above is similar to the discussions on this subject at New York (1900), one can sense a slight but significant change. The necessity and inevitability of western expansion, the 'white man's burden' to protect the interests of other races and peoples, and the call assist them out of their own poverty and backwardness are all acknowledged. However, the discussions at Edinburgh also reflect a growing sense that it was not only the peoples of the South that needed Christ, but that in expanding their influence and power around the world, the countries of the West were, in many instances, acting in very unchristian ways. As a result, missionaries were beginning to call on the churches of Global Christianity, the *home base*, to seek to transform not only the ways in which their governments acted, but also their own attitudes of arrogance and superiority. Some missionaries were beginning to see that their greatest mission work was not overseas, but to their own constituents and supporters.

This dichotomy, that on one hand the churches of World Christianity were growing and were becoming partners in mission (remembering that the mission field is the world!) and on the other hand that the nations and Christians of the Global church must not only protect the 'weaker' races but also evangelize their own nations and churches, colored the discussions on each of the issues mentioned above. These issues may best be exemplified in two letters written by the conference. In one letter, which was entitled 'To the Members of the Christian Church in Non-Christian Lands', the conference gives thanks for the growth and maturity of the World churches, challenging them that they alone are responsible for finishing the task of evangelization. The conference also gave thanks that they could be 'fellow-helpers' in this task, and in fact admitted that the Global churches have much to learn from their brothers and sisters in the World Christian churches:

It is you alone who can ultimately finish this work: the word that under God convinces your own people must be your word; and the life which will win them for Christ must be the life of holiness and moral power, as set forth by

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<sup>53</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 277.

you who are men of their own race. But we rejoice to be fellow-helpers with you in the work, and to know that you are being more and more empowered by God's grace to take the burden of it upon your own shoulders.... Meanwhile we rejoice also to be learning much ourselves from the great peoples whom our Lord is now drawing to Himself; and we look for a richer faith to result for all from the gathering of the nations in Him.<sup>54</sup>

This letter, the first of its kind issued to World Christianity from a conference such as this, seems to promote ideals of unity and partnership between peoples of Global and World Christianity. However, in the second letter, entitled 'Message from the Conference to the Church', one can see both paternalistic attitudes as well as words of caution to those in Global churches:

The old scale and the old ideal were framed in view of a state of the world which has ceased to exist. They are no longer adequate for the new world which is arising out of the ruins of the old. It is not only of the individual spiritual demand that national life and influence as a whole be Christianized: so that the entire impact, commercial and political, now of the West upon the East, and now of the stronger races upon the weaker, may confirm, and not impair, the message of the missionary enterprise.<sup>55</sup>

These letters, and what they say to each group of Christians, show clearly the divided mind of the conference on how to react to the challenges arising in World Christianity. While wanting to celebrate their growth and respect their wishes, there was still the very real feeling that these people were still not quite like 'us' and that it was the responsibility of the Global Christians to protect them; however, there was also the realization that the *home base* had to be converted as well.

When looking at the preparations for and the discussions that took place during the conference, it is evident that, from an organizational standpoint, Edinburgh was a significant improvement over earlier conferences in its ability to create serious and critical discussion on how the various missionary societies and movements could coordinate both their activities and policies. However, it is also interesting to note that none of the Chairmen or Commission members was from the World Christian churches. In fact, when questionnaires from the Commissions were sent out, the only official respondents were Western missionaries, as well as others of 'requisite

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<sup>54</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 110.

<sup>55</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 109. It is interesting to note that this letter is addressed to 'The Church', while the letter to the World Christian churches is addressed to the 'Church in non-Christian Lands', as if they were not part of 'the church'. Although the conference agreed that the 'mission field is the world', they were not ready to do away with the dichotomy of 'younger' and 'older', 'receiving' and 'sending' churches.

experience.’ As at New York (1900), this conference was set up to be largely a gathering by and for those from Global Christianity.

One can also see this fact reflected in the makeup of the delegates. Robson gives figures for the official delegates: ‘Forty-six British Societies were represented by slightly over 500 delegates; sixty American Societies also by more than 500 delegates; forty-one Continental Societies by over 170 delegates; and twelve South African and Australasian Societies by twenty-six delegates.’<sup>56</sup> As Utuk says, ‘Edinburgh was predominantly a Conference for the “mother churches.”’<sup>57</sup> The fact is that the World Christian churches were, by and large, still not allowed to speak for themselves. Instead, Westerners spoke for them. As Gairdner states, ‘[when] one contemplated the English-speaking delegations, it was realised to what an extraordinary degree they even by themselves *represented* a world-wide constituency [italics mine].’<sup>58</sup> The delegates from the Global churches were to represent the areas in which they worked, speaking on behalf of millions who were allowed no voice of their own.

That notwithstanding, there were at Edinburgh a few voices representing World Christianity, and Gairdner writes about the impact that these had on the conference:

[Possibly] the most interesting, certainly by far the most significant figures of all, were those of the Oriental and African delegates, yellow, brown, or black in race, that were scattered among the delegates in that World Conference. For not only by their presence but by their frequent contributions to the debates, they gave final proof that the Christian religion is now rooted in all those great countries of the Orient and South; and not only so, but that it possesses in those countries leaders who, for intellectual ability and all-round competence, were fully worthy of standing beside the men who have been mentioned, even without the traditions of two millenniums of western Christianity at the back of them.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Robson, ‘History of the Conference’, pp. 18-19. It is important to note that all of the delegates from South Africa were white.

<sup>57</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 34.

<sup>58</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, p. 53.

<sup>59</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, pp. 56-57. While this description of the participants and their contributions at the conference is indeed quite flattering, Gairdner goes on to give descriptions of a few of the participants, concentrating and reinforcing the fact that they are the ‘others’ in the midst of this predominantly Euro/American gathering: ‘Tong Tsing-en ... is in full Chinese costume – skull-cap and pigtail, and stuffed quilted jacket of richest peacock blue silk. From India come some whose light-brown colour and clear-cut features proclaim the Aryan, and some whose Dravidian blood is shown by their darker skin.... And finally, men of African race, one a negro of immense size glorying in his African race, from Liberia, the only independent negro organized state in Africa.’ Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, pp. 57-58. This type of description, on the one hand speaking of the intellect and abilities of participants from World

In his official history of Edinburgh, Robson also celebrates the participation by these nationals:

[Never] before did the representatives of the older churches of the West meet with so many representatives of the young churches of the East. The latter were present from Japan, Korea, China, Assam, Burma, India and Ceylon. With two exceptions, all of the addresses were delivered in English, and even the Japanese delegate, who on these occasions used an interpreter, afterwards spoke in remarkably good English.<sup>60</sup>

As Sawyerr points out, however, the number of delegates from the World churches was quite small, and they did not actually represent the churches to which they belonged: 'The delegates came as representatives of missionary societies and not of churches. Only 18 participants were from the younger churches and these were not representatives of their own churches, but of western missionary societies.'<sup>61</sup> It is also interesting to note that, although the official records celebrate that fact that Africans were present, Utuk points out that 'one need not be surprised to discover that representing Africa were hundreds of Western missionaries and four black Americans.'<sup>62</sup> While Asia was beginning to be afforded some prestige and respect, Africa was still a long way from having her indigenous sons and daughters invited to participate in any meaningful way in the discussions and deliberations that were to have a direct impact on the growth and direction of World Christianity.<sup>63</sup>

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Christianity, and on the other hand describing them according to their racial features or 'costume', is common in missionary literature of this time.

<sup>60</sup> Robson, 'History of the Conference', p. 19. Assam refers to an area in northeast India. Ceylon is present day Sri Lanka.

<sup>61</sup> Sawyerr, 'The First World Missionary Conference: Edinburgh 1910', p. 257. Sawyerr lists the official delegate total from the World Christian churches as 18, however most sources list 17. Hogg explains this apparent disparity: 'C.C. Wang, a Chinese student studying in Edinburgh, presented the Chinese nationalist position from a Christian view-point to the Edinburgh Conference.... Although present at Edinburgh, he appears not to have been an official delegate.'; see Notes in Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 396. Latourette agrees and also points out that there were some who felt that even inviting this small number was a problem: 'At Edinburgh 1910 members of the younger Churches were still few. They came, not as representatives of these Churches, for Churches as such were still not represented. They were seventeen in number, of whom fourteen were appointed by the missionary societies with which they were connected, and three specially chosen by the Executive Committees in Britain and America. There was opposition in some quarters even to the appointment of these few.' Latourette, 'Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council', p. 359.

<sup>62</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 34. Utuk argues that, in the historical time and context in which Edinburgh took place, Europeans and Americans, in general, thought of all blacks as being African, even if they were part of the African Diaspora. If this is true, then in the minds of the majority of delegates at Edinburgh, these four blacks were representing the African continent and not the North American continent which was their home.

<sup>63</sup> The first African to actively take part in deliberations was Dr. James Aggrey (1875-1927) from the Gold Coast (modern day Ghana), who was a professor at Livingstone College in North Carolina. He

That said, the World Christians who were present at Edinburgh made contributions to the discussions of the conference that far outweighed their meager numbers.<sup>64</sup> According to Latourette, '[few] though they were, these seventeen were accorded positions on the programme quite out of proportion to their number. Of the forty-seven public addresses given at noon and in the evenings, they were responsible for no less than six, and all took part in the discussions.'<sup>65</sup> Much of the credit for this fact is given to John Mott and his work with students. Of the Asians present, 'some of them had been leaders in the Student Christian Movement in the homelands. They were a symbol of the world-wide church.'<sup>66</sup>

When looking at the contributions and speeches given by the Asian delegates, one is struck by how forthright and honest they were, even though it must be remembered that they numbered no more than eighteen out of over 1200. In dealing with the issue of funds given by a Western society, K. Ibuka, representing the work of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in Japan, stated that 'it does not always follow that the gifts of foreign Churches should always be administered exclusively by the missions.... The essential thing is that the funds shall be administered by men accounted worthy. Nor are funds, important as they are, everything. The churches already established are largely the work of the Japanese ministry; and the same will be true of those yet to be established....'<sup>67</sup> Tasuku Harada, representing the ABCFM's work in Japan, spoke on 'The Contribution of Non-Christian Races to the Body of Christ.' He said that missionaries should not seek to destroy indigenous cultures, but to find what is good and worthy in the lives of all peoples, insisting that this was the model followed from the earliest times of Christianity: 'Just as the religion of Christ triumphed over the religion of Rome, not by destroying, but by absorbing all that was valuable in the older faith, so the appropriation of all that the ancient culture of the Orient can contribute will be for the glory of God, our Father, and of our common

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participated at the founding meetings of the International Missionary Conference at Lake Mohonk in 1921. Professor Davidson Jabavu of the South African Native College, Fort Hare, in South Africa, and Chief Sirwano Kuluba of Uganda were the first Africans to participate in a World Missionary Conference. They attended the Jerusalem Conference in 1928. For more information on African participation in these early conferences, see Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, pp 59-198.

<sup>64</sup> For more on this, see 'Chapter 5 – "Give Us Friends!" The Voice of the "Younger" Churches' in Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*, pp. 91-131.

<sup>65</sup> Latourette, 'Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council', p. 359.

<sup>66</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 135.

<sup>67</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 302.



Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.’<sup>68</sup> Gairdner also tells of Harada’s contribution in a discussion about the use of the word ‘native’ by speakers at the conference:

The word ‘native,’ though laboriously held up for a like condemnation, was continuously slipping out of the mouth of speakers of all nationalities. Almost immediately after the Chairman’s elaborate denunciation and abjuration of it, a patriotic Chinese speaker was only advised that he himself had violated the taboo by the laughter that interrupted him at the forbidden word. After that, good resolutions broke down with a rush and with a sign of relief the delegates, ‘foreign’ and ‘native’ alike, fell back on the dubious but useful word: whereby it was to be inferred that it is an indispensable word, difficult to replace; and that its soiling by ignoble use is nothing but a call to the Church to redeem it again, rather than hand it over to the defilers. Perhaps, though, President Harada ... gave ... a beautiful hint of an alternative word, when, with a wonderful insight into the genius of the English tongue, he spoke of ‘the Mother Churches.’ The Mother Churches! Why not then the *Daughter*, instead of the Native, Churches!<sup>69</sup>

The most well-known and oft quoted Asian delegate was V.S Azariah, an Anglican who had been specially invited by the British Executive Committee. According to the records of the conference, Azariah did not want to address the conference, and only ‘yielded on condition that he might speak his whole mind.’<sup>70</sup> His subject was ‘The Problem of Co-operation Between Foreign and Native Workers’, and he was extremely candid in his remarks concerning racism in mission work:

The problem of race relationships is one of the most serious problems confronting the Church to-day. The bridging of the gulf between East and West, and the attainment of a greater unity and common ground in Christ ... is one of the deepest needs of our time. Co-operation between the foreign and native workers can only result from proper relationships.... [In] India, the relationship too often is not what it ought to be, and things must change, and change speedily, if there is to be a large measure of hearty co-operation between the foreign missionary and the Indian worker.<sup>71</sup>

Azariah continued by stating that, while he knew from personal experience that friendship and reciprocal relationships between missionaries and Indians was possible, many of the missionaries needed to change their attitude towards and treatment of the Indian Christians:

[While] ‘East is East and West is West’, is such a friendship possible between two races, that in habits, customs, and modes of thought are so diametrically

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<sup>68</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 288.

<sup>69</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, pp. 105-106.

<sup>70</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, p. 110.

<sup>71</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 306.

opposed to each other? I know in my own experience that such friendships *are* possible. I am thankful to say that some of my best friends are among the foreign missionaries.... Do not these voices from North and South call attention to the same danger and the one remedy? The pioneer missionaries were ‘fathers’ to the converts. The converts in their turn were glad to be their ‘children’. But the difficulty in older missions now is that we have a new generation of younger missionaries who would like to be looked upon as fathers, and we have a new generation of Christians who do not wish to be treated like children. If the Christian community of the second and third generations, through the success of missionary work, has risen to the position when they do not any longer care to be treated like children, should we not be the first to recognize this new spirit and hasten to strengthen the relationship, by becoming their friends?<sup>72</sup>

Azariah finished his speech by thanking the missionaries for their sacrifices in building up the Indian church; however, he said, the Indians want more out of these relationships: ‘Through all the ages to come the Indian Church will rise up in gratitude to attest the heroism and self-denying labours of the missionary body. You have given your goods to feed the poor. You have given your bodies to be burned. We also ask for *love*. Give us friends!’<sup>73</sup>

Gairdner records that not everyone in attendance was happy with what Azariah had said: ‘The address commanded, to say the least, a by no means unqualified assent in that great assemblage. Possibly some of the men – Indian missionaries they were – whose dissent, and even more than dissent, boiled every now and then to the surface, did not quite understand what the speaker was intending.’<sup>74</sup> Regardless of the reception of the speech, or whether the missionaries could really comprehend (or wanted to comprehend) what Azariah was calling for, Gairdner contends that ‘[most] people, one fancied, were touched by a sincere speech. It could after all do one no harm to be reminded of the difficult ideal of inter-racial friendship.’<sup>75</sup>

The delegates from Asia made a contribution to the discussions and debate at Edinburgh much larger than their numbers would imply. Their words were honest and, sometimes, quite strong. Not everyone was able to agree with what was said, but the fact that they were given a platform to speak and share freely was a major advance over previous conferences. We have said that this period in mission history was an

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<sup>72</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 309.

<sup>73</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 315.

<sup>74</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, p. 109.

<sup>75</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, p. 111.

era ‘between the times,’ and K. Ibuka, previously quoted, sums up the challenges and responsibilities Christians on both sides of the North/South divide faced:

...[The] introduction of Christianity into a non-Christian country may be divided into three periods. The first period – the period of the first founding of Christianity... - is now past. The third period is yet to come, and for that period other men must answer. The period now present is the intermediate one – the time of transition; and times of transition are commonly times of difficulty. For this period we are responsible, and for the way in which its difficulties are met we – Churches and missions alike – shall be judged.<sup>76</sup>

At the beginning of this section, the word used to describe Edinburgh was ‘watershed’. This designation is accurate for a number of reasons. First, because it was a working conference, organized around a set of subjects to be discussed and debated, Edinburgh was able to achieve much more than past conferences in terms of stimulating specific joint action and coordination between the various mission societies. Second, Edinburgh is remembered as a true ‘world conference’. This designation may seem strange considering the few who were invited from the churches of World Christianity (and none from the continent of Africa); however, for the first time, American, British, and Continental mission societies were all proportionally represented. The primarily Western delegates had, for the first time, acknowledged the growth of the World Christian churches as well as an understanding that the days of speaking of ‘older’ and ‘younger’ churches would one day cease; the whole world was the mission field. By acknowledging this fact, Edinburgh introduced the concept of partnership, as well as the tensions inherent in its use, into the ecumenical discourse. In addition, although not representing World Christian churches but mission societies, the Asian delegates had taken the opportunity given and spoken directly to issues that affected their churches. In this sense, ‘Edinburgh stands ... as the prototype of all the “world conferences” now so familiar. Unlike its predecessors, Edinburgh was what its title indicated. In co-opting personnel and in scope its commissions had been world-wide. Its purview was global. Its constituency further exemplified its world-wideness.’<sup>77</sup> This last point is of vital importance, because once delegates from World Christianity had been invited to speak and take part in deliberations, the door had been opened. When summing up Edinburgh, Latourette claims that it ‘did more than build on past achievements in

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<sup>76</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 305.

<sup>77</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 135.

evangelism and unity; it prepared for the turbulent years which lay ahead, blazed new trails in Christian fellowship and co-operation, and enlisted and inspired men who were to become outstanding in the ecumenical movement in later years.<sup>78</sup>

In 1900 when delegates left New York, there was a general feeling that another conference was both desired and necessary, however no official plans had been made for another world conference. At Edinburgh, this omission was not repeated. In his closing address of the conference, John Mott stated that '[the] end of the Conference is the beginning of the conquest. The end of the planning is the beginning of the doing.... Gathered together from the different nations and races and communions, have we not come to realise our oneness in Christ? Therefore though there have been few resolutions ... God had been silently and peacefully doing his work.... It is not His will that the influences set forth by Him shall cease this night.'<sup>79</sup> Mott's address served to celebrate the only official resolution that was voted on and passed at the conference: to set up a Continuation Committee to carry on with the work started at Edinburgh, as well as to plan another world missionary conference in the future. It is to the work of this committee that we now turn.

#### 4.3 The Creation of the Continuation Committee

The only resolution that was brought to the floor during Edinburgh involved the establishment of a Continuation Committee to carry on the work that had been started at the conference. Although this was a momentous decision and was, as we shall see, to have far reaching consequences, both for the ecumenical movement as a whole and specifically for the relationships between churches of Global and World Christianity, the idea of a Continuation Committee was not new. Hogg states that 'many now suppose it to have been spontaneously generated in June, 1910, or to have been the special project of one or two conference leaders. Such, however, is far from the fact. The idea for a continuation committee may have long been in many minds, but the first formal appeal came from Continental societies.'<sup>80</sup> In October 1909, the German *Ausschuss* sent a letter to Edinburgh's preparatory committee, stating that '[the] missionary societies of the Continent of Europe take the liberty to propose in the enclosed memorial the formation of an "International Committee" dealing with

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<sup>78</sup> Latourette, 'Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council', pp. 356-357.

<sup>79</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 347.

<sup>80</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 117.

international missionary questions.’<sup>81</sup> Three months later, in the first few weeks of 1910, ‘Julius Richter, speaking for twenty-five Continental societies, addressed the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. He outlined the Continental proposal for an international agency and sought to enlist American support for it.’<sup>82</sup> John Mott was present at the meetings and, according to Hogg, ‘grasped the situation at once and advocated that British societies be urged to form an organization similar to those in Germany and America and to unite with these other two bodies in an international missionary committee.’<sup>83</sup> The British received this request with interest, but decided that since the Edinburgh meeting was only a few months away, they would wait until the report of Commission VIII, ‘Co-operation and the Promotion of Unity’.

When the report of Commission VIII was received, it was apparent that the need for some type of organized body to carry forward the work that had begun was necessary. The Commission VIII report argued that the way in which missionary work had been practiced over the past decades was, especially in light of the changing world conditions, no longer acceptable:

The operations in the foreign field are often carried on in the same country, and even side by side, by agents representing Churches and Societies of different Christian nations. And the movements towards unity and co-operation in the mission field include missionaries of different nationalities. Therefore not only the Missionary Societies in a single country, but Missionary Societies throughout the world, must be in as close communication as possible with one another.<sup>84</sup>

In light of these facts, the Commission VIII report went on to introduce a formal resolution: ‘We recommend that a Continuation Committee be appointed, such as can deal effectively with any duties that may be relegated to it; that it be international and representative, reflecting in this respect the comprehensive character of the Conference itself; and that it be instructed to deal with the same range of subjects as

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<sup>81</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 117. Hogg also notes that this proposal was supported by Nicol Macnicol and V.S. Azariah, both from India. The German *Ausschuss*, formed in 1885 (interestingly the same year as the previously mentioned Berlin-Congo meeting where the division of Africa among European powers took place), was a standing committee ‘established to represent the common interest of German missionary societies, especially in their relations with colonial governments. It was to proceed on all missionary questions of current importance without interfering in the internal affairs of the mission societies themselves.’ Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, pp. 70-71.

<sup>82</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 118. The Foreign Missions Conference of North America was formed in 1893, much along the lines of the German *Ausschuss*, and representing both American and Canadian mission societies.

<sup>83</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 118.

<sup>84</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission VIII*, p. 144.

the Conference, and on the same lines and under the same restrictions.<sup>85</sup> After making this resolution, the report then went on to list the duties of such a committee, as well as restrictions in scope and power:

We suggest that among other duties which the Conference may think fit to refer to the Continuation Committee should be the following –

- (1) To maintain in prominence the idea of the World Missionary Conference as a means of co-ordinating missionary work, of laying sound lines for future development, and of generating and claiming by corporate action fresh stores of spiritual force for the evangelisation of the world.
- (2) To finish any further investigations, or any formulation of the results of investigations, which may remain after the World Missionary Conference is over, and may be referred to it.
- (3) To consider when a further World Missionary Conference is desirable, and to make the initial preparations.
- (4) To devise plans for maintaining the intercourse which the World Missionary Conference has stimulated between different bodies of workers, e.g. by literature, or by a system of correspondence and mutual report, or the like.
- (5) To place its services at the disposal of the Home Boards in any steps which they may be led to take ... towards closer mutual counsel and practical co-operation.
- (6) To confer with the Societies and Boards as to the best method of working towards the formation of such a permanent International Missionary Committee as has been already recommended by this and other Commissions and by various missionary bodies apart from the Conference. We venture to further indicate three principles which seem to form the necessary basis on which any constructive work on the part of an International Committee could be solidly built.
  - (a) It should from the beginning be precluded from handling matters which are concerned with the doctrinal or ecclesiastical differences of the various denominations.
  - (b) This being assured, it would be desirable that it should be as widely representative as possible.
  - (c) Yet it should be a purely consultative and advisory association, exercising no authority but such as would accrue to it through the intrinsic value of the services that it may be able to render.<sup>86</sup>

There were obviously going to be many aspects to the work of the Continuation Committee, but it was not to be an end in itself. Its ultimate goal was to found an International Missionary Committee, with representatives from a world-wide constituency, to promote and coordinate the work of missions. The Commission agreed that '[if] the formation of such an International Committee is accomplished, the Continuation Committee ... should be authorised to transfer to it, wholly or in

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<sup>85</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission VIII*, pp. 145-146.

<sup>86</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission VIII*, pp. 146-147

part, the task which it has itself received from the Conference; but if an International Committee be not formed, the Continuation Committee should, either wholly or in part, carry on the work allotted to it.’<sup>87</sup> Gairdner agrees that the ultimate goal of the Continuation Committee was the formation of an International Committee, and says that the delegates were well aware of this fact: ‘The perusal of Clause 6 ... in the resolution was a reminder that a Continuation Committee of this Conference was not the same thing as the International Committee.... The Continuation Committee of the Conference was only a step towards that end, though a great and important one....’<sup>88</sup>

Although Gairdner reports that there were intense debates over specific points, the resolution was passed. Despite the various backgrounds, ecclesial and national, from which the delegates came, ‘[the] enormous section of Christendom represented at Edinburgh, 1910, *was ready for a Continuation Committee*.... The enthusiasm with which the motion was passed showed that in passing it the delegates realised that they were making progress, in the path along which God had evidently been leading....’<sup>89</sup> Hogg agrees when he states that ‘[this] was Edinburgh’s climactic moment.... [On] the afternoon of 1910’s longest day Edinburgh had taken one of the longest forward steps ever made in the history of Protestant missionary co-operation. That act, the creation of the Continuation Committee, will be forever associated with the Edinburgh Conference.’<sup>90</sup> Gairdner also points out the passing of this resolution not only showed the vision which the delegates at Edinburgh had regarding the future, but also how much the ecumenical atmosphere had changed since New York (1900). An unnamed delegate is quoted as saying that the Continuation Committee ‘could not have been launched except in such an atmosphere as that which we find ourselves breathing in this Conference. Ten years ago it would have been, and was, impossible!’<sup>91</sup> Gairdner also states that the passing of this resolution by such a diverse group showed how the international church was evolving, interestingly using words attributed to Herbert Spencer: ‘Had it been otherwise – had the Conference been tamely homogeneous – its unanimity would have been a viscous adhesiveness, rather than the “definite coherent heterogeneity” in which both Herbert Spencer and

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<sup>87</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission VIII*, p. 147.

<sup>88</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, p. 193.

<sup>89</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, p. 202.

<sup>90</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 130.

<sup>91</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, p. 196.

Hegel, in their different ways, have taught us to see the attainment of successively higher stages of unity and life.’<sup>92</sup>

By referring to the thought of Spencer and social Darwinism, one can see clearly the dichotomy that existed during this era. On the one hand the idea of social evolution was still very much alive, along with accompanying feelings of superiority and paternalism by those from Global Christianity. However, conversely, the passing of this resolution by such a diverse group showed that people were more willing than ever before to work with others, on a world level, who were different from them in thought, beliefs, and nationality. Despite the fact that at this time the vast majority of those cooperating were Western, this opening of space which started at Edinburgh was to continue to grow and offer Christians from World Christianity, over time, more and more presence and participation in the ecumenical movement.

The opening of space for World Christians had immediate effects in the makeup of the Continuation Committee. The original proposal from the *Ausschuss* in 1909 had mentioned representation consisting of ‘twenty missionaries and statesmen from Great Britain, the United States, and the Continent as well as Canada, South Africa, and Australia.’<sup>93</sup> However, the delegates at Edinburgh, while giving most of the positions on the committee to Westerners, allowed three representatives who were nationals from the World churches: ‘Thus North America, the Continent of Europe, and Britain were each to have 10 members, while one each was assigned to Africa, Australia, China, Japan, and India.’<sup>94</sup> Latourette notes that, although this representation was small in numbers, it was a foretaste of things to come. He writes that adding these three was an advance that ‘was prophetic of the growing place which the younger Churches were to have in the ecumenical movement in the years ahead.’<sup>95</sup> The Continuation Committee had come into existence and delegates had been elected. Over the next few years it would try and fulfill its mandate and at first, mostly through the work and travels of John Mott, was successful. However, the outbreak of World War I, along with infighting caused by the war, would make the

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<sup>92</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, p. 197.

<sup>93</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 118.

<sup>94</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 52. The three members from the South were K.C. Chatterji of India, Cheng Ching-ye of China, and Bishop Yoitsu Honda of Japan. The African delegate was Prof. J.I. Marais of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa, a white South African.

<sup>95</sup> Latourette, ‘Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council’, p. 359.



attainment of the committee's ultimate goal, the establishment of an International Missionary Committee, a difficult and long task.

#### 4.4 The Work of the Continuation Committee

The first meeting of the Continuation Committee was brief, lasting only two days, and was an appendage to the Edinburgh meeting. The first order of business was to elect officers:

On June 23, 1910, the last day of the World Missionary Conference, The Continuation Committee assembled briefly to prepare for its first major meeting. This gathering on June 24 to 25, which came at the close of the World Missionary Conference, elected Dr. John R. Mott ... chairman, and Eugene Stock of the Church Missionary Society and Dr. Julius Richter from Berlin vice-chairmen, and appointed J.H. Oldham its full-time, salaried secretary.<sup>96</sup>

The only other business of note was the formation of committees to carry on the work of the Commissions that had reported at Edinburgh. One of the committee members, Dr. George Robson, 'submitted a list of subjects requiring consideration, and a general expression of opinion from the Members of the Committee followed.'<sup>97</sup> The subjects followed along the same lines as those studies by the Edinburgh Commissions, with a few additional subjects. These included 'unoccupied fields, Christian education, statistical uniformity, missions and governments, and press relations.'<sup>98</sup> To this end, Special Committees were organized to carry on the work that had begun at the World Missionary Conference. This short gathering was seen as a successful first meeting, and it was agreed that the committee should meet again in one year. However, as Hogg states, 'it had completely by-passed the first item on its agenda – the formation of a permanent international committee!'<sup>99</sup>

The Continuation Committee met a second time from May 16-19, 1911, at Auckland Castle. Because of the time necessary to travel from their respective countries, the three Asian members of the committee all sent their apologies. This particular meeting was attended only by members from the Global churches. At this meeting two very important decisions were taken: decisions that were to have long

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<sup>96</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 145.

<sup>97</sup> *Minutes of the Continuation Committee of the World Missionary Conference, II, Meeting 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> June 1910* (Edinburgh: World Missionary Conference, 1910), p. 3.

<sup>98</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 145.

<sup>99</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 145.

term consequences for the ecumenical movement as a whole, and for the World Christian churches in particular.

The first of these was the decision by the committee to begin the publication of an international journal for the study of missions. The secretary of the committee presented the subject for discussion: 'A Memorandum on the subject of the establishment of an International Missionary Review was presented by Mr. Oldham, being the result not only of his own thoughts, but of careful enquiry from members of the Committee and from outside experts. Details of the character of the Magazine and of the financial aspects of the issue were laid before the committee.'<sup>100</sup> The council, after discussing the issue, approved it, agreed to entitle it *The International Review of Missions (IRM)*, and laid down the basic principles by which the proposed journal would be run: 'It was resolved that while the Review is the organ of the Continuation Committee, it should be the declared policy of the Committee that its pages be open for the free and full expression of divergent views.'<sup>101</sup> In this way, '[with] an interdenominational and international outlook, the new journal would explore principles rather than chronicle details, and year by year would foster a sense of unity in the task of world evangelism.'<sup>102</sup> Latourette agrees when he states that '[the] *Review* immediately took its place as the outstanding supra-confessional international journal in the field of missions.'<sup>103</sup>

The first issue was published in January, 1912, and in it Oldham, who had been selected as editor, explained the reasons why an international journal was necessary at that point in history: 'The study of missionary problems will be undertaken in international co-operation. Each nation has the capacity of apprehending more clearly than any other some particular element or aspect of the whole, and in proportion as the special gifts of each are made contributory to the common good, there will result a larger, richer, and juster view of missionary work than has yet been attained.'<sup>104</sup> Oldham also stated that, '[the] time being past ... when missionary problems can be studied exclusively from the standpoint of Europe and

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<sup>100</sup> *Minutes of the Continuation Committee of the World Missionary Conference, III, Meeting 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> May 1911*, p. 4, Minute 30; hereafter cited as *Continuation Committee III, 1911*.

<sup>101</sup> *Continuation Committee III, 1911*, p. 5.

<sup>102</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 148.

<sup>103</sup> Latourette, 'Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council', pp. 363-364.

<sup>104</sup> J. Oldham, 'The Editor's Notes' in *International Review of Missions*, Vol. 1 (London: Henry Frowde, 1912), p. 4.

America, prominence will be given to contributions from the leaders of the Church in the mission field.<sup>105</sup> Some of the writers from World Christianity who contributed to the *IRM* in its first decade were: from Japan, Bishop Harada, Shigenobu Okuma, Miss Tsuda, and Professor Masumi Hino; from China, Rev. Cheng Ching-Yi, C.T. Wang, and Rev. Timothy Tingfang Lew; from India, V.S. Azariah, Professor R. Siraj ud-Din, and Mr. K.T. Paul; and from South Africa, Professor Davidson D.T. Jabavu. Admittedly, these were few compared to the number of authors from Global Christianity who contributed, but the numbers did increase over time, especially following the International Missionary Conference in Jerusalem in 1928.

The second decision that was made at the meeting was to send a representative of the Committee to Asia. This request came from the Special Committee studying the 'Church in the Mission Field'. According to Mott, this Special Committee, building on the work done at Edinburgh, showed 'the rapidly increasing numbers, of the strengthening of character, of the new evangelistic energy and spiritual victories, and above all of the growing independence and power of self-propagation of the various native Churches in Asia and Africa.'<sup>106</sup> This desire and need to send someone to visit the Asian churches was a sign of the Continuation Committee trying to build on the unity and inclusiveness that was started at Edinburgh. Mott and others believed that the Continuation Committee

is, in an important sense, a world's Committee. It must plan, speak, and act internationally. Its members will seek to understand their task and to express their convictions from the point of view of a world enterprise. Missionary leaders have so long approached their problems and conducted their activities from sectional, national, and racial angles that this will not be easy. The Atlantic Ocean and other stubborn geographical facts will militate against it; but the Committee must pay what it costs in time, money, forethought, and patience to overcome these limitations. Even national questions will more and more be dealt with from an international point of view. The responsibilities of the Continuation Committee ought not be allowed to drift into the hands of a few, or of any one national or racial group, but, as at the Edinburgh Conference, all must share the burden.<sup>107</sup>

It was also recognized that, while the churches of Global Christianity had, to a large extent, organized national and/or regional missions conferences (such as the *Ausschuss* in Germany and the Foreign Missions Conference of North America), there

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<sup>105</sup> Oldham, 'The Editor's Notes', p. 4.

<sup>106</sup> John R. Mott, 'The Continuation Committee' in *International Review of Missions*, Vol. 1 (London: Henry Frowde, 1912), p. 69.

<sup>107</sup> Mott, 'The Continuation Committee', p. 73.

was still a 'great need for missionary councils in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.'<sup>108</sup>

To these ends,

[the] Committee ... requested its Chairman to consider whether he can arrange to devote a considerable proportion of his time to the work of the Continuation Committee and its Special Committees, more particularly in visiting with mission fields, acquainting missionaries and native leaders with the work and plans of the Continuation Committee, studying how missionary bodies on the field and this Committee may be brought into mostly mutually helpful relations, and assisting the work of the Special Committees in such other ways as may be determined by the Executive acting in consultation with them.<sup>109</sup>

After much persuasion, and with the understanding that he could also use the visit to Asia to work for the World's Student Christian Fellowship, Mott was convinced that he should go.<sup>110</sup> At the next meeting of the Continuation Committee, held at Lake Mohonk in New York from September 26 to October 2, 1912, Mott came prepared for the trip: 'He had consulted missionary executives, had reviewed findings compiled by a private research secretary, and had studied all available data on the lands and churches he would be visiting.'<sup>111</sup> His visit was to encompass 'eighteen regional and three national conferences in Asia – in Ceylon, India, Burma, Malaya, China, Korea, and Japan.'<sup>112</sup> When the Lake Mohonk conference was over, Mott left on this 'extended tour throughout the principal mission fields of Asia – fields embracing over three-quarters of the inhabitants of the non-Christian world.'<sup>113</sup>

The Asian conferences were, to a large extent, organized along the lines of the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh. As Edinburgh had done, '[the] conferences were devoted largely to discussions based on the syllabus of important questions prepared by the Chairman ... in consultation with secretaries of the Mission Boards, with members of the Continuation Committee and its Special Committees, and

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<sup>108</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 149.

<sup>109</sup> John R. Mott, 'Introduction' in *The Continuation Committee Conferences in Asia, 1912-1913: A Brief Account of the Conferences Together with Their Findings and Lists of Members* (New York: Chairman of the Continuation Committee, 1913), pp. 9-10. Hereafter cited as *The Continuation Committee Conferences in Asia*.

<sup>110</sup> Hogg states that 'Mott was not traveling exclusively for the Continuation Committee, ... for as general secretary of the World's Student Christian Federation, he also planned an extensive program of student evangelism. In that task he had persuaded Sherwood Eddy to accompany and assist him.' Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 151.

<sup>111</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 151.

<sup>112</sup> Latourette, 'Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council', p. 364.

<sup>113</sup> Mott, 'Introduction', p. 10.

by correspondence with missionaries and native leaders.’<sup>114</sup> The questions were organized according to the ‘eight major areas covered by the syllabus: occupation, evangelization, the church, leadership, the training of missionaries, education, literature, and co-operation. The Asian Conferences replaced two Edinburgh subjects, the “home base” and “missions and governments,” with “Christian leadership” and “Christian literature.”’<sup>115</sup> It is significant to note, however, that although the organization of these conferences was based on Edinburgh’s example, there were very important differences. While Edinburgh had been primarily a conference of the Global churches, the Asian conferences were much more representative: ‘Of the nearly sixteen hundred members who participated, 14 per cent were women and 35 percent were Asians ..., and unlike the 1910 gathering, these produced findings.’<sup>116</sup>

When reading Mott’s report, one finds surprising unanimity in the findings, especially considering the fact that missionaries and nationals were present in fairly equal numbers. For instance, at the India National Conference, it was agreed that ‘whenever capable and spiritually minded men and women are discovered, Churches and Missions should make a real and unmistakable advance by placing Indians on a footing of complete equality, in status and responsibility, with Europeans.’<sup>117</sup> The India National Conference also agreed that ‘the work carried on by foreign Missionary Societies should be gradually transferred, as opportunities offer, to the Indian Church....’<sup>118</sup> To this end, ‘[the] India National Conference recommended a plan for the formation of provincial representative councils of missions and of a national missionary council made up of delegates from the provincial bodies. To make the project a reality, an Interim Committee was appointed.’<sup>119</sup>

When the China National Conference met, the effects of growing nationalism on evangelization were discussed: ‘In order that Christianity may appeal with force to the minds and hearts of the Chinese people and win their growing national consciousness for the service of Christ, it is of the utmost importance for the Churches to be so developed that the Chinese themselves may recognize them as having

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<sup>114</sup> Mott, ‘Introduction’, p. 11.

<sup>115</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 152.

<sup>116</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 152.

<sup>117</sup> *The Continuation Committee Conferences in Asia*, p. 127.

<sup>118</sup> *The Continuation Committee Conferences in Asia*, p. 127.

<sup>119</sup> Latourette, ‘Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council’, p. 364.

become truly native.’<sup>120</sup> To that end, the conference listed ways of helping develop the indigenous character of the churches:

- (1) The Chinese Churches should be organized with local and district representative councils, wherever these do not exist.
- (2) Representative Chinese should have a share in the administration of foreign funds used for the work of the Chinese Church.
- (3) Church buildings should, wherever possible, be erected on grounds separate from the foreign missionary residences.
- (4) In the management of the evangelistic, educational and other work of the Church, there should, to the fullest possible extent, be joint control by Chinese and foreign workers. All positions of responsibility open to Chinese Christians should, as far as practicable, be related to Chinese organizations rather than to foreign Missionary Societies.
- (5) In order to promote the full exercise by the Chinese of complete self-government in the Churches, the Missions should in every possible way teach and train Chinese leaders who will be qualified to occupy all places of authority.<sup>121</sup>

The Chinese National Conference also issued a statement on the relationships between the missionaries and the nationals which reminds one of the call of V.S. Azariah in Edinburgh:

The purpose of missionary work within the Chinese Churches is the impartation of spiritual gifts to the end that they may be established; that is, that the Churches of the West may be comforted together with those of China by the mutual faith of both. Therefore, while gifts of money, teaching, methods of organization and self-sacrificing service are indispensable, we must recognize that the love which manifests itself in personal friendship between Chinese leaders and foreign missionaries is a fundamental condition of fruitful service in our common work for Christ.<sup>122</sup>

When looking at the representation of the National Conference, one can see how things in China had changed compared to past meetings: ‘Only six years before, nine Chinese had been onlookers at a great convention of *missionaries*. Now, welcomed on a full equality, Chinese comprised nearly one-third of the membership of a conference of *Christians*.’<sup>123</sup> Like India, a China Continuation Committee was formed, having Chinese form “not less than one-third” of its members.<sup>124</sup> The China Continuation Committee agreed to have two secretaries, one of whom was to be Chinese.

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<sup>120</sup> *The Continuation Committee Conferences in Asia*, p. 327.

<sup>121</sup> *The Continuation Committee Conferences in Asia*, p. 330.

<sup>122</sup> *The Continuation Committee Conferences in Asia*, p. 328.

<sup>123</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 153. The previous conference referred to is the Shanghai Missionary Conference of 1907.

<sup>124</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 154.

While the need for greater participation and responsibility on the part of nationals in both India and China was recognized, the resolutions passed seem quite conciliatory. However, at the Japanese National Conference, the tone was much more firm in stating that authority must shift from the missions to the Japanese churches.

According to Hogg, the Japanese situation was quite unique:

Japan's situation differed from that in any other land. The zeal, initiative, and independence of able Japanese leaders produced much more 'church consciousness' there than elsewhere. The distinction between the indigenous church and the foreign-guided mission, with attendant problems of relationships, had become by 1910 probably further advanced in Japan than in any other land.<sup>125</sup>

The Japanese National Conference stated that '[the] relationship between the missionaries and the Japanese Church is in a state of transition. Gradually the administration of all affairs must be transferred to the Japanese and the problem is to accomplish this in a satisfactory way. The cordial relations which now exist are essential and so long as they are maintained there is ample room for the work of the missionary in Japan.'<sup>126</sup> When the Continuation Committee of Japan was organized, unlike the committees in India and China, the initial membership was divided equally between missionaries and nationals. In an example embodying this spirit of mutuality, the Japanese National Conference called for a cooperative evangelistic effort on the part of the Japanese churches and the mission societies, calling for funding and leadership to be provided by all involved:

In view of the present condition of the Christian Church in Japan we feel the necessity of a great co-operative movement which should be entered into by all denominations. This great co-operative movement should be carried on under the direction of the Continuation Committee of Japan, and should be continued for the term of three years. For this purpose, the sum of *Yen* 30,000 should be raised from among our Japanese and foreign friends. The raising of this fund should be entrusted to the Continuation Committee of Japan. To aid in this work of evangelization, prominent preachers and leading members of all denominations in Japan should be asked to give their assistance, and distinguished speakers should be secured from abroad through the kindness of the Continuation Committee of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 154.

<sup>126</sup> *The Continuation Committee Conferences in Asia*, p. 414.

<sup>127</sup> *The Continuation Committee Conferences in Asia*, p. 430.

The proposal of this three year plan was one of the highlights of Mott's time in Asia; so much so that he 'provided one-third of the necessary finances.'<sup>128</sup>

Mott had experienced a successful tour to Asia and had gained many insights into the strength of the World Christian churches and their relationships with missionaries and Western societies. But his greatest success was helping to facilitate the establishment of independent national organizations to coordinate the work in each country, as well as relate to the international Christian community as well:

[These] national organizations came into being through the independent action of churches and missions in Asia. In no sense were they subordinate to the Edinburgh Continuation Committee. That body was viewed rather as a first among equals, symbolizing the togetherness of all the national missionary organizations. Each continuation committee provided a voice for the thoughts of the younger churches in its land and gradually began to translate their hopes into action. All the while these national bodies were aware of being linked by an international agency with councils sharing similar problems and aspirations in other lands. The resulting growth of world-consciousness and of commitment to a common task produced in years to come the most far-reaching consequences.<sup>129</sup>

After completing this successful tour of Asia, Mott returned to the West, reporting the Edinburgh Continuation Committee all that had been learned and done over his six month journey.

In November, 1913, the fourth meeting of the Continuation Committee took place at The Hague. There were no members from the World churches present. Although there were other topics to discuss, it was understood that the most 'outstanding event in the work of the Committee during the past year was the tour undertaken by its Chairman in Asia.'<sup>130</sup> It was reported that '[the] missionaries and leaders of the Church in the mission field who were present at the conferences in Asia called into existence on their own initiative representative committees to carry forward the work of the conferences and to give effect to their findings.'<sup>131</sup> It was acknowledged that '[the] most important of these committees are the National Missionary Council in India, the China Continuation Committee and the Continuation Committee of Japan.'<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 155.

<sup>129</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 156.

<sup>130</sup> *Minutes of the Continuation Committee of the World Missionary Conference, 1910: The Hague, 14th-20th November 1913*, p. 1; hereafter cited as *Minutes of the Continuation Committee, The Hague*.

<sup>131</sup> *Minutes of the Continuation Committee, The Hague*, p.2.

<sup>132</sup> *Minutes of the Continuation Committee, The Hague*, p.2.



One issue that arose from Mott's trip was the nature of the relationship between these new entities in Asia and the Continuation Committee of the World Missionary Conference. It is an issue which Hogg describes as '[the] most important action taken at The Hague.'<sup>133</sup> In respect of these relationships, it was agreed that 'in the judgment of the Continuation Committee the only bodies entitled to determine policy are the home boards, the missions, and the Churches concerned.'<sup>134</sup> It was a policy that formally recognized the right of all churches, and for the first time included the churches of World Christianity, to form their own plans and, to a large degree, determine their own destinies. It was not a policy agreed to lightly, and '[long] and serious deliberation took place before the Committee enunciated its fundamental principle: that only missions and churches could determine missionary policy.'<sup>135</sup> However, from his travels and experiences Mott believed that the World churches were not yet ready to go it alone. As the Japanese had asked for assistance from the West in carrying out their plans for evangelism, Mott believed there was still much that could be done cooperatively between the Global and World churches. In the report of his travels published in the *International Review of Missions*, Mott wrote that

[the] problems and responsibilities of the Church in each non-Christian land suggest the need of some co-operative arrangement by which the influence of the Church in other lands may be brought to bear most helpfully. The special committee on the Church in the Mission Field may possibly best meet this recognized need. It should place at the disposal of missionaries and the native Christian leaders in each mission field the best experiences of other fields. It should conduct investigations on certain subjects, among them the following: 'How can truly indigenous Churches be developed?' 'What are the tendencies leading to closer co-operation or to separation between the Churches and missionary societies of the West and the rising Churches on the mission field?' .... Moreover, it will be well here and there ... to hold conferences to discuss these and other questions relating to the development of self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating Churches.<sup>136</sup>

To this end, and to help cement the ties between the Global and World churches, Mott suggested as well that

[everything] practicable should be done to strengthen the bonds of union between the new Churches in non-Christian lands and the Church Historic, the

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<sup>133</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 161.

<sup>134</sup> *Minutes of the Continuation Committee, The Hague*, p. 6.

<sup>135</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 162.

<sup>136</sup> John R. Mott, 'Present Possibilities of Co-operation in the Mission Field' in *International Review of Missions*, Vol. 3 (Edinburgh: Morrison & Gibb Limited, 1914), p. 217.

Church Universal. This point is one of cardinal importance just now at the time when independent Churches are springing up on every hand, and when, owing to the growing national spirit, there is danger of the development of Churches in the East which will be separate in aims and sympathies as well as in activities from the Churches in the West.... There could be no greater danger than for native Christianity to become separate from historical, credal, ecumenical, living Christianity.<sup>137</sup>

In looking back at the work of the Continuation Committee of the World Council of Churches, much had been accomplished. The *International Review of Missions* had been established in 1912 and served to disseminate scholarly work and stimulate discussion on many topics pertaining to world mission. In the countries of Asia, voices from the World churches had been heard as they asked (or demanded) more autonomy and freedom from Western missionary societies, and national organizations had been formed to foster cooperation and great independence. However, much was still left to do. Seen as lagging behind Asia in the development of national churches, Africa had, to a large extent, been ignored. And the primary reason for the creation of the Continuation Committee, that of forming an International Missionary Committee, was not even close to being accomplished. While plans were in place for the accomplishment of these unfinished tasks, the Continuation Committee did not have the chance to complete its work:

The Continuation Committee had planned to meet next at Oxford, England, in September, 1914, but it never assembled again. Officially, the Committee continued until 1921. Actually, the advent of World War I sounded its death knell.... [The] Continuation Committee of the four post-Edinburgh years with its annual conferences and its international commissions died in the summer of 1914.<sup>138</sup>

#### 4.5 Assessing this Era ‘Between the Times’

When surveying the first few years of the twentieth century, one can see throughout the era that missionaries and mission societies from Global Christianity were of a divided mind as to how to deal with the changes going on around them, both in the larger world and in the Church. This struggle is exemplified in John Mott’s book *The Present World Situation, With Special Reference to the Demands Made Upon The Christian Church in Relation to Non-Christian Lands*; a book written just months before the beginning of World War I and that found its inception in Mott’s

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<sup>137</sup> Mott, ‘Present Possibilities of Co-operation in the Mission Field’, pp. 217-218.

<sup>138</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 162.

visit to Asia. On one hand, Mott acknowledged the growth and aspirations of the nations of the South and the World Christian churches: 'The present is a time when rising tides of nationalism and racial patriotism are surging on every hand. Wherever the world traveler may have gone in recent years he has become very conscious of the thrill of a new life.... This growing spirit of nationality and racial patriotism can no more be resisted than can the tides of the sea.'<sup>139</sup> Later Mott notes that

[every] day civilization is becoming more and more international. National thought, national custom and national action are giving way in every sphere to internationalism. Races which have had nothing in common are discovering increasingly their interdependence, and are seeking earnestly to understand each other and to find ground for co-operation. For thousands of years the East and West have lived apart; but it becomes more and more evident that their destinies are blending and that for all the future they must live together.<sup>140</sup>

Mott also understood that, because of advances in transportation and communication, for the first time the world seemed like a smaller place: 'Now that the world has found itself in its unity as one body (and this is the first half generation in which this could be said), it can no longer be a matter of indifference to one part of the world-body what happens in any other part. If there be a plague spot in China or Turkey or Africa, sooner or later it must affect America, England, and Germany.'<sup>141</sup> When speaking about ecclesiastic relationships, Mott said that '[the] drawing together of Christian forces in all mission lands is one of the most characteristic and encouraging facts of the time'<sup>142</sup> and that 'Christians of different names should cultivate the habit of reminding themselves that they are one.'<sup>143</sup> Finally, Mott suggests that, in the end, it is the relationships being built across racial and cultural barriers that made the most difference: 'Real unity is based in intimate knowledge, confidence and affection, and all this is the result of seeing much of each other in close fellowship. Unity of heart must precede any more formal unity.'<sup>144</sup>

In much of his book, including those passages quoted, the implication is that in this intercultural and interracial discourse, some form of common understanding

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<sup>139</sup> John R. Mott, *The Present World Situation, With Special Reference to the Demands Made Upon The Christian Church in Relation to Non-Christian Lands* (New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1915), pp.11-12; hereafter cited as *The Present World Situation*.

<sup>140</sup> Mott, *The Present World Situation*, pp. 99-100.

<sup>141</sup> Mott, *The Present World Situation*, p. 13.

<sup>142</sup> Mott, *The Present World Situation*, p. 153.

<sup>143</sup> Mott, *The Present World Situation*, pp. 160-161.

<sup>144</sup> Mott, *The Present World Situation*, p. 168.

and unity was being sought. However, it is evident that even in his calls for unity and mutuality, he still saw a great divide between the ‘civilized’ West and the rest. When discussing those who were seeking profit by the exploitation of others, he regarded the others as the ‘more backward nations.’<sup>145</sup> When referring to the spread of Christendom in such a dangerous and complex world, Mott had no problems using a colonial framework: ‘The policy for such an age as ours must be imperial to be truly Christian. In terms of the world, the work of Christian missions is empire building, and demands imperial ideas and resources.’<sup>146</sup> He also uses militaristic language in stating the need for better cooperation among mission societies, because few had ‘definite and recognized plans for *occupying* their respective fields [*italics mine*].’<sup>147</sup>

Mott lived in a world where old paradigms and world views were being challenged by new realities, such as the growing confidence and nationalism in the South, as well as the growth and maturity of the World Christian churches. Mott, like all of his contemporaries, struggled with the problem of integrating these two worlds. In the end, he recognized that changes required new ways of interrelating: ‘The growing independence and leadership of native Churches, as well as the development of co-operation between Churches and between different Missions, are introducing new difficulties, thus calling for new definitions of relationships.’<sup>148</sup> The difficulty was not in recognizing the changes, but rather in actually finding these ‘new definitions of relationships.’

In a very real sense, the comments made by K. Ibuka at the Edinburgh Conference were correct; that this was an intermediate time of transition, and that times of transition ‘are commonly times of difficulty.’<sup>149</sup> This time of difficulty, however, would be made more problematic and complex by events in 1914 and following; events that would lead to a world war primarily involving the ‘civilized’ nations of the West and permanent alterations in how those in the North and South saw themselves and each other.

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<sup>145</sup> Mott, *The Present World Situation*, p. 104.

<sup>146</sup> Mott, *The Present World Situation*, p. 61.

<sup>147</sup> Mott, *The Present World Situation*, p. 182.

<sup>148</sup> Mott, *The Present World Situation*, p. 73.

<sup>149</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Reports*, p. 305.

#### 4.6 Tracing the Four Themes

This was truly an ‘era between the times’, for while many changes have been present throughout the narrative in this chapter, it is also obvious that many of the ideas and beliefs that marked the second half of the nineteenth century were still very much a part of most people’s world view. This is readily apparent when looking at the issue of the *home base*. When delegates met at Edinburgh, they were aware (or became aware through the presence and contributions of the Asian delegates) that growth within the churches of World Christianity was beginning to necessitate changes in the nature of international relationships. However, while the leaders of Global Christianity were beginning to acknowledge this fact, noting that the whole world was the mission field, it was clear that many ‘people in the pews’ were still continuing to think of mission as the expansion and extension of Western ideas and beliefs. As we continue the narrative in the following chapters, it is important to note that this dichotomy between the views of the mission leadership within Global Christianity and those that support them will only become more pronounced.

In the area of *humanitarianism*, it is clear that during this time most Global Christians still felt that civilizing others was both natural and providential. That said, as missionaries shared their views at Edinburgh, one can begin to see some hesitation and doubt concerning the civilizing impulse. While the right to civilize was, for the most part, not questioned, a few missionaries began to realize that the countries of Global Christianity might actually be their greatest mission field.

When looking at the issue of *authority*, it is important to note that the sharing of resources, as well as the actual term ‘partnership’, entered the discussions for the first time. But while missionary leaders recognized that changes in relationships needed to take place, they did not seem to know how to implement them. This, in turn, affected the issue of *rhetoric and reality*, for while many discussions at Edinburgh, as well as from Mott’s trip to Asia, concerned the need for changed relationships between Global Christian and World Christian churches, there was little modification in the actual nature of Global/World relationships.

When looking at all of the above issues it is also important to note that, in the narrative thus far, there seems to be little realization that the differences in power between the Global and World churches is rooted in the wider power disparities in which they exist. However, beginning in the next chapter, with the coming of World War I, this fact will become harder to ignore.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Paternalism Under Attack**

After the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh (1910), spirits were high that, through the work of the Continuation Committee, Christians in both the Global and World churches would continue to find ways to work closely together. Mott's visit to Asia in 1912-13 was a boost to efforts of cooperation between the missions and local churches, especially regarding the formation of committees that would eventually lead to national Christian councils in India, China, and Japan. At the 1913 meeting of the Continuation Committee at The Hague, the last such meeting, the plan was for Mott to continue what he had started in Asia with conferences in Africa and the Near East. Ultimately it was hoped that some form of international committee could be formed to coordinate and facilitate the work of these national bodies. Unfortunately, the work of the Continuation Committee was cut short by war; a war that would forever alter the perceptions of Western civilization and Global Christianity in both the North and South.

While all four themes that we are tracing are present in this chapter, this period is marked by the realization of leaders within Global Christianity that many of the World churches were maturing, especially in Asia. For that reason, the issues of the *home base*, *authority*, and *rhetoric and reality* will all be prominent. Although there will be some discussion around the issue of *humanitarianism*, most of the efforts in development within Global Christianity will center on Global churches' efforts at recovering from the effects of war and, with the conclusion of hostilities, restarting efforts to form an International Missionary Council.

#### 5.1 The Effects of World War I

Even as the Continuation Committee set out to fulfill its task of continuing the work that had begun at Edinburgh (1910), alarms were being raised within the missionary community by the prospect of war. Writing in 1912, David Cairns put it like this:

Now right into this nascent world of aspiration and effort and prayer there has come the danger of a deeper national cleavage than modern history has known for nearly a hundred years. We cannot but ask what bearing such an event would have upon these ideals. While others are asking what such an event would mean for civilization and for the happiness and political progress of the

European nations, we must take a wider view, which includes but transcends these, and ask what a European war would mean for the Kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup>

Cairns foresaw that war would cause two fundamental problems for international mission. First, 'the enormous financial strain upon the countries involved would cripple the resources of the world mission at the very moment when great expansion is necessary.... Everywhere throughout Asia and Africa men would be compelled to wait idly and see the great flood tide that might have carried them into harbour sweep past them and turn again into the fatal ebb.'<sup>2</sup> However, Cairns believed that the far greater issue involved was

the moral and spiritual effect upon the Church if the great powers of Europe were to turn their mighty energies on the maiming and destruction of one another. Neither Britain nor Germany could emerge from that struggle, whether victor or vanquished, without enormous losses. Can the cause of human progress, can the Kingdom of God go forward without both of them? With all their weaknesses and sins these two nations stand for progress and liberty as well as order, and their latent capacity for the service of the Kingdom is past measuring.<sup>3</sup>

For Cairns, 'a European war would ... brutalize the whole life of Christendom.... It would make it harder for us all to believe in God and to love our fellow-men. It would dim all our hopes for the world.'<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately for Cairns and the life of Christendom war did come, and it would ultimately alter the balance of power in Europe and the world. As Darwin notes, '[the] First World War brought a violent end to the experiment in more or less cooperative imperialism among the six great powers (Britain, Russia, Germany, France, the United States and Japan). It reopened the question of a global partition half settled half shelved before 1914.'<sup>5</sup> The study of the history and causes of World War I do not fit into the purpose for this thesis<sup>6</sup>; however, World War I and its

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<sup>1</sup> David S. Cairns, 'Christian Missions and International Peace' in *International Review of Missions* 1 (1912), p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> Cairns, 'Christian Missions and International Peace', p. 196.

<sup>3</sup> Cairns, 'Christian Missions and International Peace', p. 197.

<sup>4</sup> Cairns, 'Christian Missions and International Peace', p. 198.

<sup>5</sup> John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Rise and Fall of Global Empires, 1400-2000* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), p. 368.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on the causes of World War I, cf. James Joll, *The Origins of the First World War*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Press, 1999); Zara S. Steiner and Keith Neilson, *Britain and the Origins of the First World War*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003); and Michael Howard and William Roger Lewis (eds.), *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) pp. 89-150.

outcome did, for a number of reasons, have important and profound effects on the evolving relationships between Western and non-Western peoples .

One issue which was to cause a reappraisal of North/South relations can be found in the very antecedents of war; the vying for control of commerce and capital by Western powers. Hogg states that ‘the urge for commercial and colonial expansion had precipitated crisis after crisis in the years immediately before the war.’<sup>7</sup> Louis argues that the colonial powers did not, in general, reap large profits from their colonies, thus part of international relations was not only seeking to acquire wealth but also trying to keep others from acquiring it:

In the scramble for colonies there were few lucky draws. Entrepreneurs and investors benefited from the diamonds and gold of South Africa, the copper of Katanga, the rubber of Malaya, the oil of the East Indies and the Middle East. Generally, however, the colonial possessions proved to be white elephants, not least in trade and commerce. In 1910 the German colonies accounted for less than 1 per cent of German trade and in 1912 the Belgian Congo contributed only 1 per cent of Belgian trade.<sup>8</sup>

This, in turn, led to conflicts and war regarding who had access to and control of meager resources. It was not, however, only the European nations which were to make decisions of war and peace based on commercial concerns. The United States had declared itself neutral at the start of the war, and technically did not enter it until 1917. However, historians agree that the United States was providing Britain and its allies with arms throughout the conflict, and that Germany was aware of this fact.<sup>9</sup> In 1916, Karl Axenfeld, director of the Berlin Missionary Society, met with John Mott and asked him to speak to President Woodrow Wilson, a close friend of Mott’s, concerning the arms trade with Britain. Mott responded that ‘if President Wilson had foreseen where this would go, he would have never followed it in the first place, but now he was in a “fatal situation.” If he halted the traffic, he would antagonize the

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<sup>7</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 165.

<sup>8</sup> Wm. Roger Louis, ‘The European Colonial Empires’ in Michael Howard and Wm. Roger Louis (eds.) *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 93.

<sup>9</sup> Zinn states that ‘[it] was unrealistic to expect that the Germans should treat the United States as neutral in the war when the U.S. had been shipping great amounts of war materials to Germany’s enemies. In early 1915, the British liner *Lusitania* was torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine. She sank in eighteen minutes, and 1,198 people died, including 124 Americans. The United States claimed the *Lusitania* carried an innocent cargo, and therefore the torpedoing was a monstrous German atrocity. Actually, the *Lusitania* was heavily armed; it carried 1,248 cases of 3-inch shells, 4, 927 boxes of cartridges (1,000 rounds in each box), and 2,000 more cases of small-arms ammunition. Her manifests were falsified to hide this fact, and the British and American governments lied about the cargo.’ Zinn, *A People’s History of the United States*, p. 362.



manufacturers and workers in the munitions industry....'<sup>10</sup> The American economy grew enormously due to the war, and according to Zinn 'by April 1917 more than \$2 billion worth of goods had been sold to the Allies.'<sup>11</sup>

J.H. Oldham lamented the state in which the countries of Global Christianity found themselves as war waged around the world:

[Is] it not necessary to recognize that the spirit of materialism and selfishness and the belief in the might of the stronger have entwined themselves round the roots of western civilization? Far more important than the immediate causes of the war are the conditions that made it possible. It is the product of a false and unchristian conception of the relations of men to one another. Of this conception the antagonisms of the western nations are only one expression. The same wrong attitude is seen in the racial prejudice and hatred which is one of the most sinister features of our time. It expresses itself in the industrial warfare and class alienation that disturb the life of all western nations. The whole commercial system of the West is based largely on the principle of securing advantages at the cost of some one else; and it is noteworthy that conflicting commercial interests have been one of the chief influences that have fostered national antagonisms.<sup>12</sup>

Second, although the war started out as a conflict over European power and influence in the Balkans, the fighting was not confined to the European continent. Within just a few months, the war spread to include the Ottoman Empire, northern Africa, the Persian Gulf, and the Orient. In addition, '[in] West, East, and South Africa, colonial wars broke out between the British, French, and Belgians on one side and the Germans on the other.... Here was proof that, with a world economy and a single system of world politics, there was no escape for the fallout of war, wherever it started.'<sup>13</sup>

As the war spread from Europe to virtually all areas of the globe, finding a peaceful and diplomatic end to the fighting became more difficult. Blainey states '[the] more nations that joined in the fighting, the harder the task of bringing all to the negotiating table. Even by the end of 1914 a calmly negotiated treaty of peace was impossible.'<sup>14</sup> In addition, it was not only Europeans who were fighting as well as dying, but colonial subjects were called to duty as well. Judith M. Brown notes that, for Britain, 'India became a reservoir of fighting power, paid for by Indians, which

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<sup>10</sup> Richard V. Pierard, 'John R. Mott and the Rift in the Ecumenical Movement During World War I', *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 23 (Fall 1986), p. 613.

<sup>11</sup> Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*, p. 362.

<sup>12</sup> J.H. Oldham, 'The War and Missions', *International Review of Missions* 3 (1914), pp. 629-630.

<sup>13</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 374.

<sup>14</sup> Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p. 47.

the British could and did deploy around the globe for imperial purposes – from China, through the Middle East to the Western front in the First World War.<sup>15</sup> J.H. Oldham, in early 1915, wrote that '[one] of the greatest tragedies of the war is that the struggle has invaded Africa.... The greater part of the continent has heard the clash of arms; natives of Africa as well as European administrators and colonials are fighting on both sides.'<sup>16</sup> As colonial subjects were forced to participate and fight a European war, strong nationalism, as well as feelings of bitterness and anger, emerged in many of them. As Neill states, '[in] the First World War ... Indian, African, and Japanese troops took part, with great distinction, against white men. On the whole they dutifully followed the behest of their rulers; but here and there was lingering resentment that so many thousands of Indians and Africans had been drawn into quarrels which were not theirs.'<sup>17</sup>

This fact, that the so-called civilized countries of Global Christianity had waged a war largely for control and access to resources and markets, and had, in the process, called on their colonial subjects to fight and die, could not but have had detrimental effects on the way in which colonized subjects viewed their colonial overlords. W.E. Burghardt Du Bois (1868-1963), the first African American to graduate with a PhD from Harvard, wrote an article for *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1915 which spoke to many of the grievances felt by colonized peoples, especially Africans. When seeking to trace the causes of war, Du Bois went back to the Berlin Conference of 1885:

It all began, singularly enough, like the present war, with Belgium. Many of us remember Stanley's great solution of the puzzle of Central Africa when he traced the mighty Congo sixteen hundred miles from Nyangwe to the sea. Suddenly the whole world knew that here lay the key to the riches of Central Africa. It stirred uneasily, but Leopold of Belgium was first on his feet, and the result was the Congo Free State – God save the mark! But the Congo Free State, with all its magniloquent heralding of Peace, Christianity, and Commerce, degenerating into murder, mutilation, and downright robbery, differed only in degree and concentration from the tale of Africa in this rape of a continent already furiously mangled by the slave trade. That sinister traffic, on which the British Empire and the American Republic were largely built, cost black Africa no less than 100,000,000 souls, the wreckage of its political and social life, and left the continent in precisely the state of helplessness

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<sup>15</sup> Judith M. Brown, 'South Asia' in Michael Howard and William Roger Louis (eds.) *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2000), p. 241.

<sup>16</sup> J.H. Oldham, 'A Missionary Survey of the Year 1914', *International Review of Missions* 4 (1915), p. 40.

<sup>17</sup> Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, p. 416.

which invites aggression and exploitation. ‘Color’ became in the world’s thought synonymous with inferiority, ‘Negro’ lost its capitalization, and Africa was another name for bestiality and barbarism.<sup>18</sup>

Du Bois then recounted the history of the industrial revolution in both Europe and America, stating that as economies and industry grew, so did the need for raw materials and cheap labor. And from where do these raw materials and cheap labor come? Du Bois stated that they

[come] primarily from the darker nations of the world – Asia and Africa, South and Central America, the West Indies and the islands of the South Seas.... Chinese, East Indians, Negroes, and South American Indians are by common consent for governance by white folk and economic subjection to them. To the furtherance of this highly profitable economic dictum has been brought every available resource of science and religion. Thus arises the astonishing doctrine of the natural inferiority of most men to the few, and the interpretation of ‘Christian brotherhood’ as meaning anything that one of the ‘brothers’ may at any time want it to mean.<sup>19</sup>

Du Bois also looked at the recent changes in world power, including the Japanese defeat of Russia and growing nationalism in China, and foretold that the rising aspirations of non-Europeans would not be tolerated for long by those in power:

[Yellow] Japan has apparently escaped the cordon of this color bar. This is disconcerting and dangerous to white hegemony.... This is the ‘Yellow Peril’, and it may be necessary, as the German Emperor and many white Americans think, to start a world-crusade against this presumptuous nation which demands white treatment. Then, too, the Chinese have recently shown unexpected independence and autonomy, which may possibly make it necessary to take them into account a few decades hence.<sup>20</sup>

At the time of the war, however, in du Bois’ mind ‘Africa is prostrate. There at least are few signs of self-consciousness that need at present to be heeded.’<sup>21</sup> With this

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<sup>18</sup> W.E. Burghardt Du Bois, ‘The African Roots of War’, *The Atlantic Monthly* 115 (May 1915), p. 708.

<sup>19</sup> Du Bois, ‘The African Roots of War’, pp. 709-710.

<sup>20</sup> Du Bois, ‘The African Roots of War’, p. 710. It must be noted that it was not only non-Europeans who were challenging the status quo. The Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, which brought Lenin and the Communists into power, was a monumental challenge to the capitalist economic system. For those in the dominant West, Communist Russia became a threat to world order and stability, although Neill states that some in the West did start to ask questions concerning the current world order: ‘Were the Marxists non in part right? Was not the colonial epoch in reality a period of shame rather than of glory for the Western world?’ Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, p. 416. In the South, Blainey states that ‘[across] Africa, South America, and Asia, many young radicals marveled at the postwar experiments in Russia. Nehru, a young Indian – and later prime minister – was inspired by the new Soviet Union: “I had no doubt that the Soviet revolution had advanced human society by a great leap and had lit a bright flame which could not be smothered, and that it had laid the foundation for the ‘new civilization’ toward which the world would advance.”’ Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p. 71.

<sup>21</sup> Du Bois, ‘The African Roots of War’, p. 710.

background in mind, he tied the roots of World War I directly to the imperial ambitions of European states and their thirst for economic and military hegemony:

We speak of the Balkans as the storm-centre of Europe and the cause of the war, but this is mere habit. The Balkans are convenient for occasions, but the ownership of materials and men in the darker world is the real prize that is setting the nations of Europe at each other's throats to-day. The present world war is, then, the result of jealousies engendered by the recent rise of armed national associations of labor and capital whose aim is the exploitation of the wealth of the world mainly outside the European circle of nations. These associations, grown jealous and suspicious at the division of the spoils of trade-empire, are fighting to enlarge their respective shares; they look for expansion, not in Europe but in Asia, and particularly in Africa.<sup>22</sup>

Given this history of exploitation and domination by the nations of Europe and the United States, 'in the minds of yellow, brown, and black men the brutal truth is clearing: a white man is privileged to go to any land where advantage beckons and behave as he pleases; the black or colored man is being more and more confined to those parts of the world where life for climatic, historical, economic, and political reasons is most difficult to live and most easily dominated by Europe for Europe's gain.'<sup>23</sup>

War ended on November 11, 1918. It was hoped by many (especially the colonized) that the war would serve to undo many of the colonial diplomatic and economic power structures that had been in place for decades and that the days of the white man's privilege 'to go to any land where adventure beckons', as well as the black man's being 'confined to those parts ... most easily dominated by Europe', were over. By early 1919, much of Asia was in crisis as colonized peoples, spurred by promises made by Britain and American during the war, protested for more autonomy and freedom:

[The] new ideology of national self-determination, eagerly propagated as a weapon of war by the British and Americans and upheld as the leitmotif of the peace conference in Paris, dangled hope of recognition to any plausible nationalism. Amid ample signs on all sides that Eurasia's old imperial order had been washed away by the flux of war, it was hardly surprising that revolutionary symptoms now appeared almost everywhere.<sup>24</sup>

Uprisings took place in Egypt, Turkey, and the Arab Middle East. In India, protests turned violent: 'In the province of Punjab (the main recruiting ground for the Indian

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<sup>22</sup> Du Bois, *The African Roots of War*, p. 711.

<sup>23</sup> Du Bois, *The African Roots of War*, p. 172.

<sup>24</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 382.

army), the British faced what they thought was an organized rising to smash their control. Their savage reaction reached a bloody climax in the events at Amritsar on 13 April, when nearly 400 protestors were shot by troops.<sup>25</sup> In China, '[on] 4 May 1919 the university students of Peking staged major demonstrations against their own inept politicians and the foreign powers that exploited them, giving birth to modern Chinese nationalism.'<sup>26</sup> As Darwin notes,

these movements and others like them had not sprung from nowhere in 1918-19. In most cases they were built on older demands for nationhood, autonomy or at least recognition as a distinct community. In voluntary mobilization for war (as soldiers or suppliers), or the vicarious suffering of its hardships and losses, inflamed the grievances and widened the constituency of nationalist opposition. When the war ended or ... imperial authority collapsed, the political climate soon reached fever heat. It was stoked by a mixture of fear and hope: fear that the repression of wartime would be continued indefinitely and the chance of freedom lost; hope that the cracking of Europe's imperial order and the promises of self-rule broadcast by the Allies in 1918 would mark the beginning of a new 'national' age. Gaining recognition for their cause in Paris, persuading the peacemakers to right historic wrongs, winning a license for their separate existence were key objectives of nationalist leaders....<sup>27</sup>

It was with these fears and hopes that the rest of the world watched as the victors from the West meet in Paris in January 1919.

As the victors met together, each came with their own ideas of what a fair settlement would be. As Blainey notes, '[a] peace treaty drawn up by many hands – and fists too – is inevitably a maze of compromises and a clash of principles.'<sup>28</sup>

While President Wilson of the United States had pushed on behalf of Germany for leniency,

[leaders] of the victorious nations ... were less interested than Wilson in the idea of a fair and just peace. Having carried the burden and endured the heartbreaks of a long war, they wanted massive compensation from Germany and Austria. The peoples, perhaps even more than their leaders, wanted revenge. They agreed with the British politician Sir Eric Geddes who, likening the German nation to a lemon, insisted that it must be squeezed 'until the pips squeak....' [The] winners wished to slice territory from the heartland of Germany, which eventually they did; they wanted to take away all her colonies, and eventually they did. Confiscating her navy and disbanding her army, they imposed on Germany a huge fine, called 'reparations,' to defray part of the cost of the war.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 382.

<sup>26</sup> Jonathan Spence, 'China' in Michael Howard and William Roger Louis (eds.) *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2000), p. 218.

<sup>27</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 383.

<sup>28</sup> Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p. 68.

<sup>29</sup> Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, pp. 66-67.

This push for revenge on the part of the victors was to have disastrous consequences, for within two decades German nationalism would rise and its military machine would be marching through Europe again.

For the relationships between countries and peoples in the North and South, the most important development was the founding of the League of Nations, 'the first permanent international political institution.'<sup>30</sup> Countries on both the winning and losing side had colonies and decisions had to be made concerning their future. President Wilson, recalling America's so-called anti-colonial past, wanted all territories to be open to free trade. The Europeans coveted Germany's colonies as the spoils of war to widen their influence in Asia and Africa. As Rist notes,

[the] compromise was that the colonial powers received League 'mandates' over the newly 'available' territories, but had to account for their administrative practices to a Permanent Mandates Commission (PMC).... The United States won a victory because the territories in question were free from colonial protectionism ('open door policy'); the colonial powers were satisfied with what was in effect disguised annexation or colonization legitimated by an international organization....<sup>31</sup>

The compromise language was formulated under Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which stated in part:

1. To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are *inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves* under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that *the wellbeing and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization* and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant.
2. The best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that *tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to accept it*, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandates on behalf of the League.
3. The character of the mandate must differ according to the *stage of the development of the people*, the geographical situation of the territory, its economic conditions, and other similar circumstances [italics mine].<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 59. It should be noted that the only non-European country to experience significant gains in the peace settlement was Japan: '[For] the first time in many centuries an east Asian nation was honored as a world leader, and at the Paris peace conference Japan took its seat as one of the great five.' Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p. 70.

<sup>31</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 59.

<sup>32</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 60. Rist also notes that there were two types of mandates, 'A' and 'B'. The 'A' mandates were 'recognized to hold "communities" – that is structured societies.' These primarily consisted of the colonized areas of Asia. The 'B' mandates were 'inhabited' only by 'peoples', and consisted primarily of the colonized areas of Africa. One can note the same

Rist raises a number of important issues that were to affect the relationships of the colonizers and the colonized. First, he says that Article 22 ‘introduced the concept of the “stage of development”..., thereby justifying a classification system according to which there were “developed” nations at the top of the ladder.’<sup>33</sup> Second, he says that these designations were ‘couched in a humanitarian-religious language that suggested a “sacred trust of civilization” for the colonial powers.... Henceforth, the colonial enterprise would be conducted in the name of this unchallengeable “sacred trust.”’<sup>34</sup> Finally, the League of Nations would serve as a ‘kind of family counselor, mediating between a “minor” native population and the “adult” mandatory power.’<sup>35</sup>

The language of Article 22 allowed the European powers to maintain much of their economic and political control of ‘native’ peoples. While some hints at more freedom and autonomy had been made for colonial service during the war, the ultimate aim of the European powers was to keep the Western-controlled economic system in place. This control was further sealed by Sir Fredrick Lugard’s doctrine of the ‘dual mandate’, which stated that ‘the mandatory power had a responsibility both towards the natives – whom it had to “emancipate” by taking account of their interests – and towards the whole of mankind, since the immense resources had to be exploited for the benefit of all.’<sup>36</sup> With the introduction of this doctrine and Article 22, the economic hegemony of the West was couched in altruistic language. In terms of the evolution of the use of ‘partnership’, Bauerochse notes that it was during this time, ‘after the first world war – as a result among other things of the emancipation movements of the Middle East and Far East – the discussions arose about the right of self-determination for the so-called colonial nations. ...[The] term “partnership” was first used in this context.’<sup>37</sup> Although trusteeship was still the dominant term, when partnership was used it served simply as an extension of trusteeship, refitted for a new time and world situation.

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differentiation being made in mission. Although still seen as ‘daughter’ churches, those in Asia were at least treated like adolescents and given some freedoms. The churches in Africa were, for the most part, seen as small children, devoid of strong leadership and needing tutelage for the foreseeable future.

<sup>33</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 61.

<sup>34</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 62.

<sup>35</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 62.

<sup>36</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 62.

<sup>37</sup> Bauerochse, *Learning to Live Together*, p. 90. According to Bauerochse, the term was first used by the British to describe relations with their colonies in Asia. Because Africa was believed to be at a lower ‘stage of development’, the term was not used in relation to colonies located there.

The European and American powers were custodians of the world's resources; they were to use them for the benefit of humanity. From the perspective of the Global Christianity, G. F. Barbour states that '[one] could hardly find a document of state ... a more emphatic expression of the Christian principle that the wielders of power, political, financial or scientific, should use it for the benefit and not the exploitation of the less fortunate.'<sup>38</sup> Yet those who were on the receiving end of custodianship had a right to be more than a bit suspicious. Oldham's observations that '[the] whole commercial system of the West is based largely on the principle of securing advantages at the cost of some one else'<sup>39</sup> was still, at the signing of peace, largely true. And while the League of Nations Covenant talked about the development of peoples as a 'sacred trust', the fears of many in the South, raised by Du Bois, were still true as well. The white man was still 'privileged to go to any land where adventure beckons and behave as he pleases; the black and colored man [was] being more and more confined to those parts of the world ... most easily dominated by Europe for Europe's gain.'<sup>40</sup>

One interesting note concerning the League of Nations was that, even though many of its ideas and ideals were strongly supported by President Wilson, the United States Congress refused to join. According to Darwin,

America's influence could be better applied from outside the League. If economic muscle had replaced territorial control as the test of world power, as many experts now claimed, bankers in Wall Street, not diplomats at Geneva, would be the real engineers of America's future preeminence. Hence rejecting the League did not mean American withdrawal into isolation. American business was extremely active in Europe, in South America, and even in Asia. American culture, purveyed by Hollywood, spread even more widely. American leaders promoted the idea of universal peace, and favoured cooperation with Britain against an arms race at sea. But American thinking was at heart unilateralist. It expected America to supersede the existing world order, not to help maintain it. It refused to see America as one of a group of great powers, on terms of equality. It reflected the suspicion of Middle America that foreign commitments were risky, and foreign countries malign. Hence America dealt with the League as with a rival, sometimes friendly, power.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> G.F. Barbour, 'Foreign Missions and the League of Nations', *International Review of Missions* 9 (1920), p. 366.

<sup>39</sup> Oldham, 'The War and Missions', p. 630.

<sup>40</sup> Du Bois, 'The African Roots of War', p. 712.

<sup>41</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, pp. 404-405.



This abstention marks the beginnings of American world hegemony, both militarily and economically; an aloofness to the international community that can be seen still today.

Even without the United States, there were hopes that the League would be able to bring peace and stability to a world bloodied and bruised by war. However, Blainey notes that with these hopes came the realization that the imbalances of power and representation would be problematic:

Meeting for the first time in 1920, the League of Nations seemed to be the lighthouse of the world. Its aim was to shine on a path ahead. It was to prevent wars and impose social justice, though on a humble scale. *It was to protect the native peoples* who lived under European rule, to wipe out the remnants of slavery, and to ease the lot of those who labored hard day after day. [However], the absence of the United States, China, the Soviet Union, and Germany was a damaging blow to the prestige and influence of the council.... Moreover, in the assembly, the members were not representative of the wide world, being mainly European nations and their former colonies from across the seas [*italics mine*].<sup>42</sup>

Promises had been made during the war. To the European victors, however, it now seemed quite convenient (in fact it was their 'sacred trust'!) to hold on to their colonies, at least until they were mature and developed enough to stand on their own. That said, lives had been lost and sacrifices made by people from the South. Their aspirations, the League of Nations mandates notwithstanding, would be heard more and more loudly in the coming years, in both the secular realm as well as in the emerging ecumenical world. One example of this was a meeting of the League against Imperialism that took place in Brussels in February 1927. At that meeting,

[two] hundred delegates came from thirty-seven states or colonized regions, and they represented 134 organizations. The delegates traveled from the major continents, some from within the heart of the imperialist states, and others from their periphery. They worked on resolutions about most acts of barbarity, from the tragedy of the Indian countryside to that of Jim Crow racism in the United States, from the growth of Italian fascism to the danger of Japanese intervention in Korea.<sup>43</sup>

Prashad writes that the organizers of this conference 'did not choose the word *league* in the title of their organization for nothing. The League against Imperialism was a direct attack on the League of Nations's preservation of imperialism in its mandate

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<sup>42</sup> Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p. 69.

<sup>43</sup> Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: The New Press, 2007), p. 20.

system.... Brussels scorned and repudiated Versailles.’<sup>44</sup> There were hopes that subsequent meetings could also be held to continue what Brussels had begun; however, the coming world economic depression and Second World War made the realization of this dream impossible. That notwithstanding, Prashad notes that ‘regional formations did gather after Brussels, and many of these provided the bedrock for the Third World. The movements represented at the 1927 meeting had worked to prepare the ground for this experiment in intraplanetary solidarity.’<sup>45</sup> As Neill states, ‘[the] natural consequences of all this was the awakening of the ideals and passions of nationalism among the peoples of Asia and Africa.’<sup>46</sup> Utuk also agrees, noting that ‘[the] day of largely unquestioned supremacy of Western civilization with its religion and culture was about to be over, at least theoretically.’<sup>47</sup> It was into this geopolitical milieu that ecumenical leaders meet at Lake Mohonk in 1921 to try and revive the mandate of the now defunct Continuation Commission; the formation of an International Missionary Council.

## 5.2 The Effects on International Mission

The war years had devastating effects on the world missionary movement on a number of fronts. First, the relationships between the American and British leaders on the one side, and the Germans on the other, were greatly strained. Many leaders on both sides, especially John Mott, J.H. Oldham, and Julius Richter, tried to find common ground and work together. However, national pride on all sides led to disagreements over the causes of the war and which countries were responsible. As Pierard indicates, ‘[the] bitterness in the church circles of both camps deepened with the passage of time and the increasing tempo of public demonstrations, statements, pamphlets, and exchanges of fiery rhetoric.’<sup>48</sup> The biggest obstacle, however, to cooperation between Anglo-Americans and Germans had to do with issues of missionary freedom and what was referred to as the ‘supranationality of missions.’ While prior to 1914 this issue had been discussed widely at ecumenical gatherings, this was the first time in which large scale conflict would put agreed-upon theories to the test. Instead of respecting the neutrality of the German missionaries working in

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<sup>44</sup> Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, p. 21.

<sup>45</sup> Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, p. 22.

<sup>46</sup> Neill, *A History of Christian Mission*, p. 416.

<sup>47</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 60.

<sup>48</sup> Pierard, ‘John R. Mott and the Rift in the Ecumenical Movement During World War I’, p. 606.

colonies and territories administered by the British, the British instead 'seized Germany's African and Pacific possessions and interned or repatriated missionaries of German nationality who were working there as well as in Allied territories in India, Africa, and the South Pacific.'<sup>49</sup> The Germans were outraged by these acts and it would be a number of years before these relationships would be healed.<sup>50</sup>

In addition to the distrust and animosity between Anglo-Americans and Germans, the removal of German missionaries obviously had great effects on the local Christian communities among whom they worked. In the midst of these abandoned missions, Hogg states that Christians, both missionaries and nationals, stepped in to try and fill the void. In Asia, '[the] National Missionary Council of India and the China Continuation Committee, both supported largely by funds from Britain and America, rendered incalculable service to German missions in their respective lands.'<sup>51</sup> Hogg also states that

[the] war's effect on German missions was most deeply felt in Africa. All German missionaries in Togoland were repatriated in 1916, with no further provisions made for their work, although one or two Swiss stayed on for awhile. Eighty-four were removed from the Cameroons in 1915, and not until 1917 was the Paris Society able to send three persons to help hold the work together. In Tanganyika the Africans, with a minimum of supervisory help, kept their Christian work going.<sup>52</sup>

In 1920, G.A. Gollock wrote concerning the effects of war on World Christianity, both in terms of the withdrawal of German missionaries, as well as the suffering and death experienced due to service during the war:

Owing to the withdrawal of missionaries for some form of war work in their various countries, responsible posts devolved on the Christians in the mission field, especially in China, and these were efficiently filled. It has never been sufficiently recognized that members of the mission field churches suffered acutely from dislocation of trade, lack of supplies and high prices as church

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<sup>49</sup> Pierard, 'John R. Mott and the Rift in the Ecumenical Movement During World War I', p. 604.

<sup>50</sup> Hogg states that, in the end, it was J.H. Oldham who worked both to protect the German missions after the war, as well as to insure missionary freedom in any future conflicts: '...Oldham met the challenge and devoted his energy to protect missionary freedom for all – and specifically to save German missions. He did this through his efforts to salvage the Berlin Act, to preserve German missionary property under Article 438 of the Versailles Treaty, and to help establish the principle of missionary freedom in the peace settlements and in the League of Nations mandates.' Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, pp. 184-185. For more on the rift and, ultimately, the healing in Anglo-American and German relationships, cf. Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, pp. 165-201; Latourette, 'Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council', pp. 364-366; and Pierard, 'John R. Mott and the Rift in the Ecumenical Movement During World War I', pp. 601-620.

<sup>51</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 167.

<sup>52</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 168.

members in Europe did. On many Christian homes in Africa, India, China and the islands of the South Seas has fallen the shadow of common bereavement, for fathers, sons and brothers sent forth to share in the white man's welfare lie in distant graves.<sup>53</sup>

Despite the difficulties caused by the war, missionary dialogue and debate continued. While the Continuation Committee had ceased to function, one of its creations, the *International Review of Missions*, was still being produced and circulated to a wide audience in America, Europe, and the rest of the world. And while the war and its effects on mission was the subject of many articles, there were also writers, both missionaries and members of World Christianity, who kept the debates concerning the relationship between the Global and World churches alive. For example, Chengting T. Wang wrote that Chinese Christians were quite able to develop the church in their own way: '[We] should ... take cognizance of the extraordinary tenacity of the Chinese for doing things their own way. They are endowed with a high degree of originality.... In the realm of philosophy, in the field of politics, in education, in law, in commerce and industry, in customs and manners, all has originated from within.'<sup>54</sup> Herbert Anderson discussed the effects of growing nationalism on the Indian churches:

[We] must anticipate that the influence of the national spirit upon Indian church leaders will be a demand ... for complete equality in status and responsibility with European fellow-workers, and this will come as part of the emphasis the spirit of the age is placing on the desirable elimination of race distinctions. Character and capacity must be the passport for position and influence whether in church life or in missionary administration.... [There] must be the fullest, deepest sympathy with all aspirations after a Church of India, free from foreign control and desirous of developing its life, under the guidance of Christ, in its own way.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> G.A. Gollock, 'The Church in the Mission Field', *International Review of Missions* 9 (1920), p. 20.

<sup>54</sup> Chengting T. Wang, 'The Importance of Making Christianity Indigenous', *International Review of Missions* 5 (1916), p. 77. It should also be noted that Wang's article, while seeking to show that Chinese Christians were ready for more autonomy than had been granted thus far, goes on to state that '[we] must further recognize that the Chinese people cannot be ranked with the natives of Africa, the Red Indians of America, or the wild tribes of the South Sea islands. We may be behind in material civilization, especially in science and modern inventions as compared with the western natives, but in thought and literature, in innate ability and in intellectual strength, in physical endurance and vitality, we trust not to be misunderstood when we say that we are second to none.', pp. 77-78. While the partnership issues are discussed as a 'North/South' issue, and many, like Du Bois above, speak of 'brown, black, and yellow' peoples over against 'whites', many of those directly involved, in both the North and South, had their own prejudices and did not see the issues as being as clear cut as a North/South divide. When it came to devolution of power and autonomy, things were much more complicated than they appeared, as people in the South had (and have) their own prejudices.

<sup>55</sup> Herbert Anderson, 'The Modern National Spirit, the Indian Church and Missions', *International Review of Missions* 6 (1917), pp. 408-409.

Despite calls for the 'elimination of race distinctions', it seems that during the war years distinctions still applied to Africans, as shown by Robert Keable's article in 1918:

Now that the old physiological theory that the negro could never be the equal of the white man because of the shape of his skull is definitely abandoned, another scientific fact does stand out. Everyone has noticed that the development of a negro boy up to the age of twelve or so is often more rapid than that of a white boy, but that afterwards even retrogression may set in. Environment has something to do with this, but there is all but certainly yet another reason. The sexual appetite is enormously developed among the Bantu. It tends to dwarf all else after puberty. We are witnessing among the Bantu that check on the wheels, the overcoming of which, among the white race, probably marked the dawn of our progress.... Given a few generations of conversion and Christian environment, the black races will have the road to mental empire as open to them as to us.<sup>56</sup>

Along with these examples, J.H. Oldham wrote a detailed survey of the state of missions each year. This survey covered the world, continent by continent, and proved an invaluable contribution in that it was an organized international snapshot of the work done by many organizations, both missions and World churches, who often worked in isolation and otherwise would not have had the means to grasp the larger international picture. All of these, among others that could have been mentioned, show that the debates about World churches and *authority*, as well as the racial and developmental differences in the way Asian and African Christians were treated at Edinburgh (1910), did not cease during the war years. Instead, they were pushed along by the world situation; as nationalism grew in Asia so did calls for more ecclesial autonomy, while Africa was largely seen as primitive, backward, and still in need of years of tutelage under Global church guidance.

### 5.3 The Creation of the International Missionary Council

When the Continuation Committee was founded at Edinburgh (1910), its ultimate goal was the establishment of a permanent international body. But as Latourette states, '[the] coming of the first world war interrupted the prosecution of the plans for a comprehensive international missionary council. Indeed, for a time the conflict seemed to shatter hopes that such a body would ever come into being.'<sup>57</sup> Hogg relates the perspective that many had during the war: 'The Continuation

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<sup>56</sup> Robert Keable, 'The Worth of an Africa', *International Review of Missions* 7 (1918), p. 327.

<sup>57</sup> Latourette, 'Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council', p. 364.

Committee had ceased to function, many of its members had died, and from the standpoint of the missionary societies it no longer existed.’<sup>58</sup> However, in the midst of war, leaders of the American and British mission societies felt it necessary to form a committee, eventually called the Emergency Committee of Cooperating Missions. The Emergency Committee only met twice, in March and May 1919, and it was agreed to ‘regard the Emergency Committee as temporary in character to deal with important practical missionary questions until conditions admit wider international relationships.’<sup>59</sup> Only nine members could attend the first meeting, all either representing the Foreign Missions Conference of North America or the Conference of British Missionary Societies. At the second meeting there were fourteen members present, and Hogg notes that this ‘marked the first nearly representative international missionary gathering after the war.’<sup>60</sup> All of the missionary societies present represented Global Christianity, but at least, for the first time since the war began, an international gathering took place. It seemed that plans to continue with the unfinished mandate given to the Continuation Committee could proceed.

The next step towards the creation of an international body took place at Crans, in Switzerland, from June 22-28, 1920. Hogg notes that this was ‘a meeting neither of the Continuation Committee nor of the Emergency Committee. The national missionary organizations of America, Britain and Europe had called it *ad hoc*.’<sup>61</sup> At the meeting all the major mission societies were present with the exception of the *Ausschuss*, however the four German members of the Continuation Committee did attend as co-opted members. Oldham writes that the purpose for the meeting was clear from the outset: ‘After the lapse of ten years and the interruption of the war, the task to which the Conference at Edinburgh pointed was definitely taken in hand. The Conference at Crans with much care drew up a plan for an international missionary organization and unanimously agreed to submit it to the national missionary organizations in the different countries.’<sup>62</sup> The recommendation that was unanimously carried said, in part, that

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<sup>58</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 183.

<sup>59</sup> *Minutes of the Emergency Committee on Co-operating Missions*, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 1919, p. 6.

<sup>60</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 190.

<sup>61</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 195.

<sup>62</sup> J.H. Oldham, ‘A New Beginning of International Missionary Co-operation’, *International Review of Missions* 9 (1920), p. 489.

This Conference recommends to the national missionary organizations the establishment of an International Missionary Committee on the following basis:

- (1) The Committee shall be established on the basis that the only bodies entitled to determine missionary policy are the missionary societies and boards and the churches in the mission field.
- (2) The Committee shall be constituted by the national missionary organizations in the different countries which shall be entitled to send representatives....<sup>63</sup>

As in the past, the largest portion of representation was reserved for the Americans (20) and the British (14), with a smaller number for Germany (6) and France (4). Australasia, South Africa, Norway, the Dutch, Swedes, and Swiss (2 each) and the Danes, Fins, and Belgians (1 each) finished off the European contingent. The Japanese and Chinese Continuation Committees, as well as the Indian National Missionary Council, were each given three, and according to the agreement, '[two] out of the three representatives ... shall be nationals of these countries.'<sup>64</sup> While all other parts of the world were excluded, a provision was made which stated that '[the] Committee of Reference ... shall have power to nominate co-opted members not exceeding eight from countries and mission fields not otherwise represented, including Africa and the Near East.'<sup>65</sup> Once again, as the world ecumenical movement was moving forward, many Christians from the World churches were underrepresented, or not represented at all by nationals.

If one sees parallels between the proposal for an international missionary committee and the newly formed League of Nations, the similarities are not accidental. In Oldham's review of the meeting, he wrote that '[if] the peoples of the world are drawing together in a League of Nations, Christian missions must come together to take counsel about their common tasks.'<sup>66</sup> As the European and American powers worked to keep the *status quo* in both economic and political hegemony, the power base in missions was not changing very quickly either. Despite these weaknesses, the conference did serve to start the healing process between Anglo-American and German missionary statesmen, as well as constitute a basis for the formation of an international committee. And, according to Hogg, it 'set the stage for

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<sup>63</sup> *Minutes of the International Missionary Meeting Held at Crans near Geneva, June 22-28, 1920*, p. 13; hereafter cited as *Missionary Meeting Held at Crans*.

<sup>64</sup> *Missionary Meeting Held at Crans*, p. 14.

<sup>65</sup> *Missionary Meeting Held at Crans*, p. 14

<sup>66</sup> Oldham, 'A New Beginning of International Missionary Co-operation', p. 491.

the most significant ecumenical venture yet attempted by Christians concerned for world evangelism.<sup>67</sup>

After the Crans meetings, '[the] proposal for an International Missionary Committee had to be circulated, promoted, and explained.'<sup>68</sup> After more than a year of extensive travel by missionary leaders to promote the ideas found in the Crans proposal, '[the] meeting at which the International Missionary Council was finally constituted was held, at Lake Mohonk in New York State.'<sup>69</sup> Frank Lenwood, in his account of the meeting, admitted that '[though] the Council was essentially a committee of the home base, it had the help of two Chinese, two Japanese, one Indian, a Burmese woman doctor and two negroes, one from Alabama, the other born in Africa and educated in the States.'<sup>70</sup> The two African delegates were J.E.K. Aggrey (1875-1927), who was born in Ghana and was a professor at Livingstone College in North Carolina, and Robert R. Moton (1867-1940), principal of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in Alabama. Of the two, neither was representing a mission or church; both had been co-opted.<sup>71</sup>

At this first meeting of the International Missionary Conference, the issue of relationships between the churches of Global and World Christianity was faced squarely. As Hogg states, the conference 'put itself on record concerning the relations between churches and missions in such manner that it reflected the considerable progress made on this point in only a decade.'<sup>72</sup> The conference admitted that, while missionary leaders had said for years that the ultimate goal of missions was the establishment of 'three-selves' churches, *rhetoric* had very often not been followed up by actions:

It has long been generally accepted that the establishment of an indigenous Church is a primary aim of foreign missions, and that this aim implies the development of responsibility and leadership in the Church in the mission field. It has been brought home to the Council in an extended discussion that

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<sup>67</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 198.

<sup>68</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 198.

<sup>69</sup> Latourette, 'Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council', p. 366. Frank Lenwood notes that at Edinburgh (1910), the call was for the formation of an international committee. However, since it had been decided at Crans that the newly formed committee would only be representative and that the only bodies that could set policy were missions and churches, the word committee was replaced with council 'to remove all idea of executive function.' Frank Lenwood, 'The International Missionary Council at Lake Mohonk, October 1921', *International Review of Missions* 11 (1922), p. 36.

<sup>70</sup> Frank Lenwood, 'The International Missionary Council at Lake Mohonk, October 1921', p. 32.

<sup>71</sup> The other delegates representing Asia were Y.Y. Tsu and William Hung (China), Hiromichi Kozaki and Bishop Kogoro Uzaki (Japan), Dr. S.K. Datta (India), and Dr. Ma Saw Sa (Burma).

<sup>72</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 207.



notwithstanding all the efforts that have been made to carry out this aim, the Christian movement in a large part of the mission field, and in particular in India and China, labours under a serious disadvantage on account of the foreign character which it bears in the eyes of the people – a disadvantage which can be overcome only in the degree that the main leadership and direction of the Christian movement passes into native hands.<sup>73</sup>

Out of this acknowledgment, several points were agreed upon as a way forward. Utuk states that these included:

- (1) That there existed divergences in the policy and practice of several Churches.
- (2) That missions were at many different stages of development.
- (3) That conditions varied widely in different fields and sometimes within the same field.
- (4) That devolution presupposed the existence of a strong indigenous church with capable native leadership, not followship.<sup>74</sup>

While there is no doubt that these points were in large measure a reflection of the reality on the ground, one can immediately notice that the usage of the term ‘stages of development’ is almost identical to the language found in Article 22 of the Charter of the United Nations. One can also notice the continuance of a qualitative difference in the treatment of the churches of Asia and Africa, closely resembling the differences in the ‘A’ and ‘B’ mandates.

That notwithstanding, the International Missionary Council raised serious questions that, as Lenwood suggested, ‘should be read as restrained and cautious suggestions of men passionately convinced of the need for a rapid transfer of real authority to any native church which has reached the stage of adolescence.’<sup>75</sup> The questions raised involving issues of power and *authority*. For instance, the IMC noted that, in areas where World Christian churches had shown some growth and maturity, missionaries should ‘serve under the direction of the constituted ecclesiastical authorities of the country to which they are sent, and that they should have the same ecclesiastical status as that of corresponding indigenous workers.’<sup>76</sup> In addition, questions concerning the shared control of finances and decision making, as well as the roll of the World Christian churches in the calling of missionaries, were discussed

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<sup>73</sup> *Minutes of the International Missionary Council, Lake Mohonk, New York, October 1-6, 1921*, p. 47; hereafter cited as *Minutes of IMC, October 1-6, 1921*.

<sup>74</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 66.

<sup>75</sup> Lenwood, ‘The International Missionary Council at Lake Mohonk, October 1921’, p. 33.

<sup>76</sup> *Minutes of the IMC Meeting, October 1-6, 1921*, p. 48.

and debated.<sup>77</sup> Hogg notes that '[these] questions were at once an admission of overlong paternalism, an indication of the degree of maturity already reached by some vigorous national churches, and an advance in missionary thinking considerably beyond that of Edinburgh.'<sup>78</sup>

While Hogg's assertion may be true, and there can be no doubt that these questions caused serious discussions by the delegates present, other elements of Western paternalism in the meeting are quite evident, especially in Lenwood's account published in the *International Review of Missions*. Lenwood was thankful for the presence of the Asians and Africans, stating that it helped the Global church delegates keep a check on their attitudes towards members of the World churches: 'The presence of these eight people kept us close to the actual facts. There were one-sided judgments about India, sometimes rather carelessly repeated even in missionary circles, which you could not express with Dr. Datta there! We were all the better because they were not expressed.'<sup>79</sup> When referring to the two African delegates, Lenwood (in what seems to be meant as a compliment), states that

[to] my thinking and, I admit, to my surprise, the contribution reached its climax in the negroes, the poorest in spirit, the meekest of all the races on this little, noisy earth. Moton and Aggrey brought to us a touch with mother nature which went deeper than many of our sophisticated reasonings. They spoke to us with simple directness and with pictures like those that Jesus used. They got us there. How the council sat up and listened to them! And how, as we laughed, and now and then came near to tears, we understood that this was big philosophy, the wisdom that is hidden from the wise and prudent! *In God's family we cannot do without the child races.* They see Him more clearly, more cleverly, more deeply than the rest of us [italics mine].<sup>80</sup>

Representatives from the Asian churches had been involved, at least in small numbers, in international missionary gatherings since at least Edinburgh (1910), and Lenwood intimates that their presence was, among other things, helpful in muting the prejudices of missionaries. And while at Lake Mohonk representatives from Africa were finally recognized, they still were, in the eyes of the Global church delegates, representing the 'child races.'

This meeting and the newly formed International Missionary Council made significant strides in acknowledging that the World Christian churches needed to be

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<sup>77</sup> *Minutes of IMC Meeting, October 1-6, 1921*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>78</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 207.

<sup>79</sup> Lenwood, 'The International Missionary Council at Lake Mohonk, October 1921' p. 41.

<sup>80</sup> Lenwood, 'The International Missionary Council at Lake Mohonk, October 1921' p. 41.

given more autonomy. The questions raised were significant, for they would continue to be asked over the next few decades, constantly challenging the missionary world to back up their *rhetoric* with actions. As Hogg states, these questions ‘were to be asked again, for they mirrored a process of varying growth, maturity, and mutual adjustment that characterizes the process of an emerging world Christian community.’<sup>81</sup> That said, the use of language such as ‘stages of development’ show that many of the Westerners present still felt superior to those from the World churches, for it was the Westerners who were to define each ‘stage’, as well as deciding the ‘stage’ any given World church had reached. The attitudes of the delegates towards those from the World churches, especially as stated in Lenwood’s account, also show that despite the *rhetoric*, many of the feelings of superiority and paternalism were still very much present at Lake Mohonk.

#### 5.4 Events Leading Up to the Jerusalem Meeting of the IMC (1928)

As the debates and decisions at Lake Mohonk were influenced by the creation of the League of Nations, so the League continued to influence the direction of the international mission movement. As Gollock states, ‘[the] whole movement of missionary co-operation ... has to be set against the background of the general movement in the direction of co-operation and unity that is taking place throughout the world.... The League of Nations, as it is and still more as it will be, stands out in the political spheres as illustrating the drawing together of men for unselfish means.’<sup>82</sup> As the League was comprised of nations seeking to work together (although one can question if it was really for ‘unselfish means’), the IMC was to be comprised of representatives from missions and national Christian councils around the world. After the Edinburgh (1910) meeting, Mott’s trip in 1912-13 to Asia had helped to create national bodies in China, Japan, and India. In the wake of the Lake Mohonk meeting and the formation of the International Missionary Council (IMC), these and other World Christian bodies worked to organize themselves so as to be able to have representation on the IMC. In the months immediately following Lake Mohonk,

[the] National Christian Conference ..., attended by about 1000 delegates appointed by the churches and missions throughout China, created a National Christian Council of 100 members to take the place of the China Continuation

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<sup>81</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 207.

<sup>82</sup> G.A. Gollock, ‘Fifteen Years Growth: A Study in Missionary Co-operation’, *International Review of Missions* 15 (1926), p. 77.

Committee.... [Following] upon the discussions in the Representative Councils of Missions in the different provinces of India, the National Missionary Council in that country resolved to transform itself into a National Christian Council....<sup>83</sup>

In Japan, 'the National Christian Council, based upon the International Missionary Council's Hague principle, was organized on November 13, 1923.'<sup>84</sup> In Africa, the Congo Missionary Conference, formed in 1902, sought 'representation in the International Missionary Council, and in 1924 the conference adopted a constitution for a Congo Protestant Council.' National Missionary Councils were established in Australia and New Zealand, both in 1927. As these new regional bodies were formed, each sought representation on the IMC, and the issues that become apparent when looking at the IMC meeting at Oxford (1923), as well as meetings of the Committee of the Council at Canterbury (1922), at Atlantic City (1925), and at Rättvik, Sweden (1926), closely reflect the same types of issues that the League was facing through its mandate system.

One issue that continued to be discussed was the rise of nationalism in the South. It was acknowledged that in Asia, growing nationalism could be beneficial to the church. Lenwood states that '[the] strength of nationalism ... lies not in itself but in the facts to which it points. In almost every country the Church is developing a strong and natural life of its own. It obviously knows better than foreigners the wants and needs of its people. In the beginning missionaries were justified in controlling the policy of the infant church, but as the Church grows in importance it is plain that it must be free to govern itself.'<sup>85</sup> However, in keeping with the common view of Africa at the time, Oldham encouraged the Global churches to continue to control and guide the growth of World churches there:

The trusteeship of the Churches of the West for the great Christian community in Africa which they have brought into being is as binding as that of colonizing western nations for the native races of Africa. The indigenous and rapidly developing Christian community has a leading part to play in the future of Africa. To develop the work begun through missionary agencies until the African Churches have attained to maturity and can themselves

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<sup>83</sup> J.H. Oldham, 'New Spiritual Adventures in the Mission Field', *International Review of Missions* 11 (1922), p. 526.

<sup>84</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 213.

<sup>85</sup> Frank Lenwood, 'The Effects of Modern Developments on Mission Policy', *International Review of Missions* 12 (1923), p. 516.

manifest the redemption of individual and social life through the power of the Gospel is one of the most compelling tasks before the Churches of the West.<sup>86</sup>

*Authority*, the devolution of power and, closely related to it, the administration of monies, were also hotly debated. When discussing the Indian church, Lenwood argued that

[the] board policy in regard to all ... transfers of authority to the Church should be to make sure that the transfer is genuine and is not hampered by stipulations tucked away, so to speak, in the corners of the document.... This means that ultimate power to make money grants for detailed purposes in the field must lie in the Church of that field and not in the home board, or in any finance committee of missionaries acting on its behalf. Till this is conceded, the Indian Church cannot have full control, for there is hardly any operation of missions which cannot at one point or another be interpreted as involving finance and so reserved for European decision. Any subsidies given by the home board to a Church in India should be given as to any similar Church in the West and that Church should have full authority *as a Church* to spend its resources as God guides it.<sup>87</sup>

Arthur Judson Brown argued for the opposite approach; he felt that monies needed to be donor controlled. He acknowledged that '[it] is notoriously difficult for a parent to realize that a son is growing up to manhood and is entitled to decide some questions for himself. This is even more apt to be true of the home Church and the mission in dealing with native Christians of a different race, who never will see some things as we see them or be disposed to do some things as we have done them.'<sup>88</sup> Given this difficulty, when it came to money he felt that the use of funds raised overseas was not a question that the World churches were capable of dealing with:

About nineteen-twentieths of the money now expended on the foreign field comes from Europe and America. It is a sound principle that money should be administered by those who are selected by the representatives of the donors and who can be held to accountability for its use. The mission, being composed of missionaries, can be held to this accountability through its board. The native Church cannot be. It is not and should not be subject to a foreign board in a distant land. It is no reflection upon the Christians in the mission field to say that very few of them have had the experience in handling large sums of money that would qualify them to be prudent trustees of contributed funds. Men who have had little or no training in business methods and who have never handled more than one hundred dollars a year in their lives, are not

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<sup>86</sup> J.H. Oldham, 'The African Continent: A Survey of Ten Years', *International Review of Missions* 13 (1924), p. 493

<sup>87</sup> Frank Lenwood, 'The Effects of Modern Developments on Mission Policy', pp. 517-518.

<sup>88</sup> Arthur Judson Brown, 'Present-Day Problems of the Church in the Mission Field', *International Review of Missions* 10 (1921), p. 484.

the men to administer wisely several hundred thousand dollars of other people's money.<sup>89</sup>

Another issue that came to the fore during these years, and also obviously affected by the League of Nations mandate system, was the role of *humanitarianism* and *development*. As the more developed countries were to assist those 'not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world,' so the churches and missions of Global Christianity also felt the need to do their part not only to preach Christianity, but also to do all they could to alleviate suffering and hunger, and make Western education and technology as widely available as possible. As Utuk notes, the beginning of this emphasis can be seen at the Foreign Missions Conference of North America meeting in Atlantic City (1922). There the meeting called 'for immediate attention to "real social service" and alleviating the total needs in Africa and other parts of the world.... Atlantic City declared that, while missionary aim should always remain primarily evangelistic, what is evangelistic includes progress in forestry, agriculture, help and support to the unfortunates, education, medical care, famine relief, and prevention.'<sup>90</sup> In discussing unfair labor practices in Africa, Oldham states that '[if] the principle of trusteeship means anything at all, it implies the duty of fostering in all possible ways the growth of a healthy and independent native life.... Compulsion to labour for government purposes at a distance from home and pressure to work on European estates are not easy to reconcile with such a policy.'<sup>91</sup> An emphasis on education was specifically applied to Africa as a way of helping the continent lift itself out of misery and backwardness. According to Hogg, 'increasing interest in religious education becomes evident throughout the pages of *The International Review of Missions* for 1925.'<sup>92</sup> Utuk agrees that education, especially in Africa, became a central theme during the 1920's: 'The need ... was, in a word, the elevation of education as the sole aim of missionary enterprise, and in particular the involvement of the masses in this gospel of education.'<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Brown, 'Present-Day Problems of the Church in the Mission Field', p. 486.

<sup>90</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 75.

<sup>91</sup> J.H. Oldham, 'Christian Missions and African Labour', *International Review of Missions* 10 (1921), pp. 192-193.

<sup>92</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 232.

<sup>93</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 107. This emphasis on 'holistic' mission would, especially at Jerusalem and following meetings, be a contentious and divisive issue. More conservative mission leaders lamented what they felt was the dilution of the gospel, which was, as they saw it, nothing more or less than the sharing of Christ as savior. For liberals, they were simply contextualizing the gospel

In the midst of the discussions and debates mentioned above, there were some who were trying to emphasize the relational aspects of faith and that, if Christians could move past the barriers that separate them, they could find common ground through friendship and mutual respect. William Paton wrote about the ‘supreme importance of personal contacts, personal friendships, of time spent with individuals.’<sup>94</sup> John Mott emphasized that ‘[the] most distinctive function of the Council is that of establishing contacts between those of different lands who are devoting themselves to the world-wide extension of Christ’s kingdom. Few things can be done which will prove to have more highly multiplying influence for bringing in true Christian internationalism than the drawing together in enduring friendship small international groups of leading minds.’<sup>95</sup> And Gollock, in recounting the history of missionary cooperation from Edinburgh (1910), asked:

What of the future? Shall the missionary movement, turning to full account the experience of these fifteen years, set its face to larger and more daring adventures in the years to come? Linked in the fellowship of service with people of every race and enriched by an understanding of their outlook, may it not be given to it both to bear to the non-Christian world the supreme witness of love and unity among those who are Christ’s disciples, and also to contribute to the alleviation of bitter and growing racial antagonism by a *partnership* in mutual honour and genuine respect [*italics mine*]?<sup>96</sup>

It is easy to see a number of themes that continued to be discussed up to Jerusalem and beyond. It was the prerogative of the missions and Global churches to define when the World churches had reached adolescence, and when (and how much) *authority* could be devolved to them. This involved issues of power and money on which there was little to no consensus among missionary leaders. Just as the nations of Europe were to give guidance and tutelage to the ‘peoples not able to stand by themselves’, the missionary community, despite the *rhetoric* of partnership and co-operation, could not seem to get past feelings of superiority and paternalism. This ideology was, however, continually challenged by some who felt that in this new era of international cooperation, emphasis needed to be placed not on the mechanics of the missionary machine but on the relationships and friendships established between

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and expanding its meaning to touch all spheres of life. Divisions and disagreements over ‘holistic’ mission, as well as biblical hermeneutics and the relationship between Christianity and other religions, will become prominent throughout the literature of this time; a theme that is still relevant today.

<sup>94</sup> William Paton, ‘The Indigenous Church’, *International Review of Missions* 16 (1927), p. 57.

<sup>95</sup> John R. Mott, ‘International Missionary Co-operation’, *International Review of Missions* 11 (1922), p. 67.

<sup>96</sup> Gollock, ‘Fifteen Years Growth: A Study in Missionary Co-operation’, pp. 78-79.

peoples who shared a common faith. This challenge was to continue to gain a voice by people from both the Global and World Christian communities.

### 5.5 The Challenge of Roland Allen and Daniel Johnson Fleming

Before discussing the IMC meeting at Jerusalem (1928), two missionary statesmen deserve attention for their critiques of missionary practice during this time. The first is Roland Allen (1868-1947), who served the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) in China from 1895 through 1903. His time of work there, which included being present during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, gave him reason to question missionary practices. According to Yates, 'Allen's observation of missionary work as it had developed in the sixty years since the opening of the treaty ports to Western influence in 1842 led him to reach radical conclusions on the way Christian mission was practiced. After his return home in 1903, these resulted in writings such as *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* (1912) and *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (1927)....'<sup>97</sup> These books were widely read and much debated during his life, and are still important for those seeking to understand the history of partnership and why the goal of truly equitable relationships is so difficult to realize.

According to Bosch, the missionary context in which Allen found himself, and which he attacked, had lost touch with the foundations on which the New Testament church was built. It had instead substituted a top-down, hierarchical rule by long established churches over newly established ones:

The church-in-mission is, primarily, the *local* church everywhere in the world. This perspective, as well as the supposition that no local church should stand in a position of authority over against another local church, both fundamental to the New Testament, was for all practical purposes ignored during much of Christian history.... On the surface, at least, the Protestant 'Three-Selfs' formula ... appeared to be more sound; soon 'younger' churches would in all respects be the equals of the 'older' churches. Reality turned out to be different, however. The younger churches continued to be looked down upon and to be regarded as immature and utterly dependent upon the wisdom, experience, and help of the older churches or mission societies. The process toward independence was a pedagogical one; in the end, the self-appointed guardian would decide whether or not the moment for 'home rule' had come. Churches and mission agencies in the West understood themselves as churches *for* others.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Yates, 'Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century', p. 60.

<sup>98</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, pp. 378-379.



Allen's critique of this system began where modern missionary work began; with the creation of the mission station. When looking at the work and life of Paul, Allen said that the missions 'did not exist, because he did not create them. He set up no intermediate between his preaching and the establishment of a fully organized indigenous church.... St. Paul preached in a place for five or six months and then left behind him a church, not indeed free from the need of guidance, but capable of growth and expansion.'<sup>99</sup> He contrasted Paul's process with the current practice seen around the world:

The first and most striking difference between his action and ours is that he founded 'churches' whilst we found 'Missions'.... The theory is that the Mission stands at first in a sort of paternal relationship to the native Christians; then it holds a coordinate position side by side with the native organization; finally it ought to disappear and leave the native Christians as a fully-organized church. But the Mission is not the Church.... The natives always speak of 'the Mission' as something which is not their own. The Mission represents a foreign power, and natives who work under it are servants of a foreign government.<sup>100</sup>

For Allen, one of the problems with 'the mission' was that, while it was meant to be temporary (remembering Venn's 'euthanasia of the mission'), the mission many times was an end in itself: 'Missionary organization in these societies is necessarily elaborate. It involved the creation of offices and departments, with directors, clerks, accountants, divided and subdivided. Now elaborate organization exercises a strange fascination over the minds of men; and this is as true of our missionary organization as of any other....'<sup>101</sup> Another problem with the mission station approach, and one that crippled the World churches, was the control of finances. In responding to an article by A.J. Brown in the *International Review of Missions* when Brown states that 'it is a sound principle that money should be administered by ... the representatives of the donor' (see above, pp.148), Allen responded that '[the] conclusion is clear: we have taught all our converts to feel helpless without money.'<sup>102</sup> Also, Allen believed that the entire concept of 'the mission station' was a misnomer: 'A mission station is

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<sup>99</sup> Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1962), pp. 83-84.

<sup>100</sup> Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?*, p. 83.

<sup>101</sup> Roland Allen, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1962), p. 98.

<sup>102</sup> Allen, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, p. 103.

indeed a contradiction in terms: mission implies movement, station implies stopping.’<sup>103</sup>

Allen charged that as nationalism continued to grow in the South, the mission station approach could only lead to conflict and struggles for power between the missions and local churches. For Allen, the mission station approach was, unfortunately, many times reactionary and ultimately about control:

When these mutterings and threatenings become violent, then our missionary statesmen begin to talk of devolution and of nice adjustments of claims, measuring carefully how much they must resign, how much they can still afford to retain in their own hands.... Whilst these missionary statesmen are busy about the nice calculation of more and less, they fail to see that their compromises can never bring peace, and that everywhere they are taking a course of action which can only end in struggle for power. They imagine fondly that they are quite ready to retire when the leaders whom they train are ready to take their place and that the moment when the native leaders are ready will be so obvious that they will all agree that it has come, and that then there will be no difficulty in handing over authority. The moment is never clear.... The moment arrives only when those who are seeking to gain authority are strong enough to drive those who hold it into concession, by threats of revolt. The inevitable result of this method is discontent and strife.<sup>104</sup>

One can clearly see how, in these circumstances, any use of ‘partnership’ simply served as cover for those not ready to truly devolve power. In another article entitled ‘Domination’, Allen writes that ‘the true domination of the foreign missionaries, not so much a lust to keep power in their own hands, as an incapacity to see that to nurse converts in the beginning, and to act as their pastors, is to become lords over them; and that to stifle their first unrecognized, unspoken instinct for self-expression, is to make certain first of sterility and then of sterile revolt.’<sup>105</sup>

Instead of the ‘mission station’ approach, Allen believed in the power of the Spirit to move and work in people’s lives; what he called ‘the spontaneous expansion of the church’. By ‘spontaneous expansion’, he meant

the expansion which follows the unexhorted and unorganized activity of individual members of the Church explaining to others the Gospel which they have found for themselves; I mean the expansion which follows the irresistible attraction of the Christian Church for men who see its ordered life, and are drawn to it by desire to discover the secret of a life which they instinctively

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<sup>103</sup> Allen, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, p. 105.

<sup>104</sup> Allen, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, p. 25.

<sup>105</sup> Allen, ‘Domination’ in David M. Paton (ed.) *The Ministry of the Spirit: Selected Writings of Roland Allen* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2006), p. 181.

desire to share; I mean also the expansion of the Church by the addition of new churches.<sup>106</sup>

He admitted that this was a difficult concept to grapple with and caused fear among many in the Global church. Allen said that

we fear it because it is something that we cannot control. And that is true. We can neither induce nor control spontaneous expansion whether we look on it as the work of the individual or of the Church, simply because it is spontaneous. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth,' said Christ, and the spontaneous activity is a movement of the Spirit in the individual and in the Church, and we cannot control the Spirit.<sup>107</sup>

For Allen, however, this was not something to be feared, but instead something to celebrate as it gave new life and direction to the missionary movement: 'The great things of God are beyond our control. Therein lies a vast hope. Spontaneous expansion could fill the continents with the knowledge of Christ: our control cannot reach as far as that.'<sup>108</sup>

According to Long and Rowthorn, 'Allen's ideas had little influence on Anglican missions during his lifetime.... His stress on indigenization and the handing over of responsibility to new churches at an early stage implied a willingness to take risks ... not shared by many of his contemporaries.'<sup>109</sup> Yates says that others discounted what he had to say because they disagreed with his hermeneutics: 'Hard-worked missionaries in the field and heavily burdened missionary administrators at home might ... find Allen's an idealistic application of New Testament patterns to their situation, often very different from the church brought up in the general penumbra of the Jewish synagogue of the Mediterranean world.'<sup>110</sup> Regardless of any who disagreed with him, in many ways he was prophetic. According to Grubb, Allen 'himself used to say that fifty years would pass before his views would win wide assent.'<sup>111</sup> His views on the coming conflict between the missions and local churches over power and devolution anticipated by forty years the coming moratorium debate. Sanneh writes that Allen predicted that '[the] day would come when the West would

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<sup>106</sup> Allen, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, p. 7.

<sup>107</sup> Allen, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, p. 12.

<sup>108</sup> Allen, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, p. 13

<sup>109</sup> Charles Henry Long and Anne Rowthorn, 'Roland Allen: Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours' in Gerald H. Anderson, Robert T. Coote, Norman A. Horner, and James M. Phillips (eds.) *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1994), p. 387.

<sup>110</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, p. 62.

<sup>111</sup> Kenneth G. Grubb, 'Publishers Forward' in Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?*, p. vi.

continue to hold the purse strings of the church but when Christianity would cease to be the monopoly of the West. Allen foresaw that time to be of no small strife.’<sup>112</sup> For the relationship of the mission to the World church, and ultimately for the study of partnership, Allen ‘remains ... a disturbing and arresting voice for modern missiology....’<sup>113</sup>

The second missionary statesman of this period that deserves our attention is Daniel Johnson Fleming (1877-1969). Fleming, a Presbyterian, had initially planned to study law, and he went to India to travel and teach in 1898 with no desire to be a missionary. However, ‘teaching at Forman Christian College in Lahore so fired his vision that his aim of returning to the US to train as a lawyer was surrendered.’<sup>114</sup> After serving in India for over a decade, Fleming returned to the US in 1912 for a two year furlough with plans to return overseas; however, due to concerns about the health of his wife and children, he could not return to India. In 1915, Fleming took up a teaching post at Union Theological Seminary in New York where he would work until 1944. Fleming’s experiences overseas led him to believe that there needed to be radical changes in mission practice, expressed most completely in *Whither Bound in Missions?* (1925). As Hoyle states, he was to become ‘the most prolific, creative, and arguably the most influential of those prior to World War II who sought to articulate a missions theory to accompany modern thought.’

Fleming first challenged missionary feelings of superiority. He asserts that historically, ‘[throughout] much of the nineteenth century, western civilization extended what helpful influences it possessed from above downward, rather than straight across from brother man to brother man.’<sup>115</sup> Over time, especially from an Evangelical standpoint, there came to be an emphasis placed on service to others out of love. However,

in time, that love came to be considered Christian where nothing was given in return and where there was an essential inequality between the parties. Christian brotherhood was defined by the Church solely in terms of benevolence. Hence the popular conception of ‘charity’ is tinged with condescension. In fact, to most people charity seems most Christian when there is no mutual exchange. Similarly, the altruism of early Protestantism took the form of sharing with others, but not receiving from them.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Lamin Sanneh, ‘Introductory Essay’ in Paton, *The Ministry of the Spirit*, p. x.

<sup>113</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, p. 63.

<sup>114</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, p. 63.

<sup>115</sup> Daniel J. Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?* (New York: The International Committee of Young Men’s Christian Associations, 1925), p. 1.

<sup>116</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?*, p. 2.

Fleming believed that new factors in the world situation of the 1920's called for a qualitative change in how mission was lived out. According to Hoyle, '[the] questions raised by the sciences, historicism, and biblical higher criticism had begun to filter down to the average church member. Further, travel and increasing numbers of books about the non-Western world were bringing a new consciousness of the excellencies of Eastern civilizations while revealing the weaknesses of the West.'<sup>117</sup> In addition, World War I caused Western nations to lose much of their prestige, and as a result nationalist movements were growing in the nations of the South. Due to these factors, Fleming was quick to attack the idea that Western culture and Christianity were one and the same, as well as the ideology that separated the world into 'Christian' and 'pagan' spheres:

[The] West is part of the non-Christian world.... We have to acknowledge that our western valuations are largely un-Christian. In current thought success is measured in terms of money, property, and material power. The commercial motive dominates the values in recreation and play, tending to lower them to the level of passion and satiation of the senses. The bitterness of class struggles proves that the Spirit has not been permitted to yield the fruits of love, joy, and peace. The glaring contrasts of luxury and squalor are quite incompatible with the teachings and spirit of the Carpenter of Nazareth. Western Christendom shows itself most apostate in the sphere of international relations, where governments are managed to buttress selfish national privilege and the material power of a special few.<sup>118</sup>

Along with attacking the West's cultural imperialism, he also attacked the racism that under-girded much of the Westerner's feelings of superiority. Fleming claimed that one could find members of all races with the same cognitive abilities, and because of that, 'we can repudiate the idea that one race is ordained permanently to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for another.'<sup>119</sup> Because of these new conditions in the world, Fleming stated that '[increasingly] this attitude of cultural superiority on the part of the West is being resented. Asia and Africa have awakened to a new sense of race respect and corporate personality.'<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Lydia Huffman Hoyle, 'Daniel Johnson Fleming: A Large Heart in the Narrow Way' in Gerald H. Anderson, Robert T. Coote, Norman A. Horner, and James M. Phillips (eds.) *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1994), p. 489.

<sup>118</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>119</sup> William J. Fleming, 'Relative Racial Capacity', *International Review of Missions* 12 (1923), p. 119.

<sup>120</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?*, p. 7.

Because of growing nationalism in Asia and Africa, Fleming could also quote a number of voices from the South who were calling for the relationships between missionaries and World Christians to change. A Chinese church leader said that ‘[intelligent] Chinese do not care to work with the type of missionary who pretends to treat the Chinese as equals, placing them in positions of nominal leadership or inviting them to meetings of trustees or committees where they sit as silent listeners.... I would ask the missionary two things: first, give the Chinese every chance to do things for themselves; second, treat the Chinese workers as equals.’<sup>121</sup> Fleming also quotes Tilak, an Indian singer, who wrote a song about the current crisis in Global/World relations that spoke clearly about the frustrations, as well as the hopes, of India’s Christian community:

Trampling upon self you have come to us to bring us Christ;  
 For us you have given life and all things, so that to our debt there is no end;  
 Yet will you heed one small request which I have still to proffer?  
 You are father and mother, we helpless infants: enough of this relationship  
   now!  
 You have driven God afar by making yourselves gods: when will you cast off  
   this skin?  
 You have set up for yourselves a kingdom of slaves: do not call it a kingdom  
   of God.  
 We dance as puppets, whilst you hold the strings: how long shall this  
   buffoonery endure?  
 How long will you keep us dead? Hath not God eyes to see?  
 Let us swim, let us sink or die; give us leastways the chance of swimming.  
 Pack up all your doctrines, and let us first find Christ.  
 Be not angry with me; I am but a poor messenger, who speaks what he is  
   bidden.  
 Come, be to us brothers and sisters! all else we can settle then.<sup>122</sup>

Finally, Fleming recalled that ‘[an] Indian Christian saint of great spiritual penetration, speaking to a friend about his relation with European Christians, said, “You know, you make us feel that you want to do good to us, but you don’t make us feel that you need us.”’<sup>123</sup>

With the changed world situation and the obvious wishes on the part of those on the receiving end of Global mission desiring relationships of mutuality, Fleming offered the missionary community a panacea for the future. First, according to Hutchison, ‘Fleming reiterated older pleas for devolution and indigenization, assailing most efforts to date as halfhearted and proposing a new and tougher test for the fitness

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<sup>121</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?*, p. 8.

<sup>122</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?*, p. 10.

<sup>123</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?*, p. 27.

of missionary recruits.’<sup>124</sup> Fleming believed that mission boards should ‘send abroad only those men and women who can live among the people as brothers and sisters on the basis of simple unaffected friendship, and who do not come as benevolent superiors from above.’<sup>125</sup> Fleming also asserted that missionaries needed to be sent overseas at the request of the World churches, and not where someone in a home office in London or Boston thought they should be: ‘[We] must more and more recognize that missionaries will be asked for, located, and retained at the call of the church on the mission field.’<sup>126</sup> If missionaries go with an open attitude, looking for friendship and willing to learn, and if they are there at the request of the World churches, then, he believed, it would ultimately lead to a qualitative difference in relationships of power:

[The] missionary of the future must be willing to *serve under* the nationals to whom he goes. At present it is common practice for nationals to serve under us; we rarely serve under them.... In the brotherly, democratic, and Christian relationship we wish to establish with our co-workers abroad, reciprocity is essential. When circumstances justify it, we must make it plain that we are ready to serve under them.<sup>127</sup>

Fleming also believed that if missionaries went abroad with the qualities listed above, they would actually learn much from their colleagues overseas and be in a position to return to the West and share knowledge and experiences with those from the Global churches: ‘Increasingly, missionaries are alert to see what they can bring back as well as what they can take. Both overseas and on furlough, many a missionary thinks of his task as being that of an interpreter. In the past he has been an interpreter *of* the West; more and more he is becoming an interpreter *to* the West.’<sup>128</sup> Finally, in the future, Fleming dreamed of a day when mutuality and friendship across all international boundaries would open up a new world of missions. His hope was one day that ‘China and Africa will be *sending* and *calling* as well as merely *receiving*; and we of the West will be calling and receiving as well as merely sending.’<sup>129</sup>

William Fleming was a seminal thinker and, in many ways, well ahead of his time. He challenged Christians, and especially the missionary community, to live out

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<sup>124</sup> Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, p. 151.

<sup>125</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>126</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?*, p. 185.

<sup>127</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?*, p. 171.

<sup>128</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?*, p. 41.

<sup>129</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?*, p. 39.

relationships of love, service, and mutuality. His calls for missionaries to serve with or under nationals, as well as to come back home during furloughs for a time of interpretation in Global churches, only really began to be realized in earnest after the moratorium debates of the 1960-70's. And his call for the Global churches to not only send, but call and receive, is still, in large measure, not realized even today. In writing about the need for new relationships, Fleming quoted Dr. Cheng Ching Ti, from China: 'May we say with all kindness that the missions have been altogether too fearful of surrendering their control... The time has come for a thoroughgoing reconsideration of the whole situation, and for readjustments that will enable the church to move forward along constructive lines....'<sup>130</sup> Fleming's life and work was an attempt to help in this process; however, it would be many years before many of his ideas began to bear fruit.

#### 5.6 The Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council (1928)

As delegates met together in Jerusalem from March 24 to April 8, 1928, it had been eighteen years since the last such gathering and much in the world had changed. As Chirgwin states,

[in] 1910 there had been no world war, no revolution in China, no non-co-operation movement in India, no hint of Bolshevist agitation anywhere, no demand of the coloured races for equal treatment by the white races, no indigenous Church firmly rooted in the life of eastern peoples, no whisper of the names of Gandhi or Sun Yat-sen or Lenin or Mustapha Kemal, no realization of the power of education as a world-force, no popular wireless, no commercial aviation and no International Missionary Council.... The amazing advance of science has largely annihilated distance. Nations that were relatively isolated eighteen years ago are to-day bound up in the bundle of the world's life; and like a large family in a small house, mankind has now to find out the art of living together.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Missions?*, p. 162.

<sup>131</sup> A.M. Chirgwin, 'The Jerusalem Meeting and the Man in the Pew', *International Review of Missions* 17 (1928), pp. 33-34. One of the changes cited by Chirgwin was the fact that travel had been made much easier. This was to begin to have implications for the future of Global/World relations. Until this time, most travel had been undertaken by Europeans going to the rest of the world. However, as Fleming notes, writing in 1925, people from the South were starting to travel to the West, beginning with students. He notes that '[the] churches of the United States and Canada altogether send only 17,000 representatives abroad. However, 7,494 students from other nations voluntarily come to us.' He asserts that many of these were coming from China, Japan, the Philippines, Mexico, and India. Fleming, *Whither Bound in Mission?*, p. 50. In the coming years this trend was to continue and, especially after World War II, increase dramatically so that, as Walls states, 'Africa and Asia are now part of Europe, part of North America....' Andrew Walls, 'Afterward: Christian Mission in a Five-hundred-year Context' in Andrew Walls and Cathy Ross (eds.) *Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Exploring the Five Marks of Global Mission* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 2008), p. 194. The ramifications of this 'reverse' migration are still being deciphered today as churches in both the North



This revolutionary world situation, with the changes in relationships between Euro-Americans and the rest of the world, caused delegates to meet for discussions on a wide range of topics, including the new and often strained relations between the Global and World churches. As Paton stated in a preliminary article, ‘something like a world society is coming into being.’<sup>132</sup> Jerusalem was a step for the missionary community and the churches of World Christianity, both in evolving relationships with each other, as well as in finding their place in this new ‘world society.’

Although the Jerusalem meeting of the IMC is considered by many to be in line with earlier gatherings like New York (1900) and Edinburgh (1910), there were significant differences between this conference and its predecessors. According to Yates, ‘[the] Jerusalem Conference differed sharply from the Edinburgh Conference in character, and still more from the kind of demonstration which the New York Conference of 1900 ... had represented.’<sup>133</sup> Utuk agrees, stating that, while ‘Jerusalem is usually called a conference, it was, actually, an enlarged meeting of the Council which, according to its constitution had to bar non-delegates from full participation.’<sup>134</sup> Indeed, according to the official history of the Jerusalem meeting, the conference was limited to no more than 400 delegates and it was ‘intended to have the same character as the ordinary meeting of the International Missionary Council, the increased membership on this occasion being recommended in order to make possible the contribution of a wider and richer variety of experience to the subjects under consideration....’<sup>135</sup> In other ways, however, Jerusalem did follow the patterns first set at Edinburgh. As with Edinburgh, Jerusalem was a working conference. Topics were chosen and preliminary papers sent out before delegates gathered. The topics included the ‘Christian message in relation to non-Christian systems; religious education; the relations between the older and younger Churches; the race problem; the Christian movement and the growth of industrialism in the East and Africa; the problems relating to the life of rural communities; the future organization of the

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and South struggle to understand how to relate to one another in this new world situation. For more, see below pp. 348-351.

<sup>132</sup> William Paton, ‘The Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council’, *International Review of Missions* 17 (1928), p. 4.

<sup>133</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 65-66.

<sup>134</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 183.

<sup>135</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council, 1928: Addresses and Other Records* Volume VIII (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), p. 7; hereafter cited as *Jerusalem Meeting: Addresses and Other Records*.

International Missionary Council.’<sup>136</sup> These themes represented the struggles and issues present at Jerusalem recognizing that the world had indeed changed greatly in eighteen years.<sup>137</sup>

Another significant change from Edinburgh can be seen in who was invited to participate. At Edinburgh, only a handful of delegates from World Christianity were invited, and they did not actually represent the World churches but rather the mission societies. At Jerusalem there were 231 delegates, and ‘instead of the sprinkling of Christians from the younger churches, like V.S Azariah and Cheng Ching-Yi ..., more than fifty of the total were nationals.’<sup>138</sup> Utuk notes that, while this was a significant improvement on Edinburgh, it was ‘far less than the fifty percent that Rättvik’s Meeting of the Committee of the Council had suggested.’<sup>139</sup> Others celebrated the greater representation as a qualitative change that marked, according to Hogg, a significant improvement in how international mission was to be approached:

The presence of a large representative group of spokesmen from the younger churches provided the most readily apparent difference between Jerusalem and Edinburgh.... The latter had been an assembly of Westerners with a handful of specifically invited guests from the younger churches. Jerusalem, on the other hand, as no other meeting before it had been, was a conference of the Protestant Christian forces from around the world.<sup>140</sup>

While the numbers do represent a significant improvement, one needs to note that not all areas of the South were equally represented. As at all earlier meetings and conferences, most of the delegates were from Asia. And of the ten African representatives, only two were nationals: ‘Professor Davidson Jabavu of the South

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<sup>136</sup> Paton, ‘The Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council’, p. 7.

<sup>137</sup> A note at the front of the preliminary draft of Volume VII – ‘The Future of International Missionary Coöperation’ – states that ‘[the] period which has developed since Edinburgh has been characterized by a marked development in interdenominational, international, and inter-racial coöperation. The time has come to restate the grounds for international coöperation, to review the progress achieved in coöperative effort, to evaluate the agencies and methods underlying the most fruitful coöperation, to consider present-day and coming-day demands of the Christian forces which can best, if not only, be met by the various bodies concerned working in coöperation, and to ascertain afresh services in this field most desired by the boards, the missions, and the Churches.’ John Mott R. Mott, ‘VII. The Future of International Missionary Coöperation – Preliminary Draft’ in *Preliminary Papers: Jerusalem Meeting 1928* (New York: International Missionary Council, 1928), p. 3.

<sup>138</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, p. 66. The total of delegates from the younger churches were 52 out of 231.

<sup>139</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 183. The Rättvik Meeting, held in 1926, had called for representation at Jerusalem (1928) ‘in approximately equal numbers of the missionary organizations of the “sending” countries, and of the Christian councils and missionary organizations on the mission field, not less than two-thirds of the delegates from the latter regions being nationals of the countries they represented.’ *Jerusalem Meeting: Addresses and Other Records*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>140</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 245.

African Native College, Fort Hare, and County Chief Sirwano Kulubya of Uganda.’<sup>141</sup> Instead, most of the African delegates were black Americans, so ‘Jerusalem continued the tradition of seeing black people as one, irrespective of where economic forces had sent them.’<sup>142</sup>

Jerusalem was, in more ways than just representation, a real step forward in the call for partnership. Hogg states that ‘Jerusalem marked a turning point from a widely held conception of missions as the foreign activity of Western churches. Instead, it provided a larger view of a Christian world mission carried out in partnership and full-cooperation between older and younger churches.’<sup>143</sup> The term used for this change was ‘church-centric’ mission and this theme can be found throughout the findings of the commission report on ‘The Relationships Between the Younger and Older Churches’. In the Council statements adopted by the meeting, a definition for this new approach is explained:

In many countries there are churches in various stages of development, younger bodies less dependent than heretofore upon missionary initiative, direction and control, with which the older churches can co-operate. There is possible now a true *partnership* enabling the older churches in an ever-increasing degree to work with, through or in the younger churches. This ‘church-centric’ conception of foreign missions makes it necessary to revise the functions of the ‘mission’ where it is an administrative agency so that the indigenous church will become the centre from which the whole missionary enterprise of the area will be directed.... This *partnership* enables the older and younger churches to face the unfinished task of world evangelization with a greater hope of ultimate success than ever before [*italics mine*].<sup>144</sup>

The summary of the council discussions also took up this theme, stating that ‘[the] world mission of Christianity has become church-centric. This was the central fact. It came out strongly in the discussion as well as in the findings. Our work and service is

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<sup>141</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 183.

<sup>142</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 194.

<sup>143</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 254.

<sup>144</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council, 1928: The Relationship Between the Younger and Older Churches*, Volume III (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), p. 209; hereafter cited as *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between Older and Younger Churches*. One notices the term ‘stages of development’ used in this statement. While there can be no doubt that the Covenant of the League of Nations and the mandates system continued to influence Global church mission, when one reads the reports of the Jerusalem (1928) meeting, especially from the nationals present, the term also represented the stark reality on the ground that a wide spectrum of development did indeed exist between churches that were ready for autonomy and those that were still very much dependent on the missionaries for funds and leadership.

increasingly related to the Church, and the foreign mission, as an administrative entity, is rapidly dropping into insignificance.<sup>145</sup>

Discussion also centered on the positive movement made at Jerusalem towards more equitable relationships. Cheng Ching-Yi framed the concept of partnership as not just relating to Global and World churches, but also to all Christians' relationship to Christ: 'The word fellowship contains the ideas both of friendship and of partnership. We are His friends in the sense that we share His values, ideals, and purposes in life: we are His partners in the sense that we have a part in His task and work.'<sup>146</sup> Dr. Franklin of the American Baptist Mission was quoted as saying that '[the] hour has come for the passing *from paternalism to partnership*. It is something more than even co-operation, it is partnership that is required [italics mine].'<sup>147</sup> And in an address to the whole meeting, Mott stated that his hope was that the decisions made by the delegates at Jerusalem would not be just words, but that they 'would do more than all other influences combined to help usher in or accelerate the coming of the day characterized by the new and true conception of the Christian missionary undertaking as a shared experience. *Then all churches will be regarded as sending churches; and all churches will be regarded as receiving churches* [italics mine].'<sup>148</sup> It is important to note from statements such as these that, while the term 'partnership' would continue to be subject to colonial interpretations, the ecumenical movement at Jerusalem was not simply borrowing its understanding of partnership of the secular, colonial world. What Franklin and Mott were calling for was an 'end to paternalism', for 'something more than even co-operation', and for undertaking 'shared experiences', all of which were quite different than simply advocating for relationships of trusteeship.

In following Franklin and Mott's hopes, others spoke about what World Christianity had to offer Europeans and Americans. The Japanese delegation said that '[we] believe that the time is come when all would gain if the younger churches were invited to send missions-of-help to the churches of Europe and America, not to ask for assistance, not to advertise their own need or their own development, but to minister of their treasure to the spiritual life of those to whom they come.'<sup>149</sup> A delegate from

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<sup>145</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 165.

<sup>146</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Addresses and Other Records*, p. 59.

<sup>147</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 173.

<sup>148</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Addresses and Other Records*, p. 23.

<sup>149</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 170.

America agreed, noting that '[we] speak about sending deputations to the field; let us invite the young churches to come and tell us at home about their spiritual life.'<sup>150</sup>

While many positive steps can be discerned from the previous discussion, when one looks at the conference as a whole, it is evident that there were still lingering attitudes of paternalism and superiority on the part of some delegates from the Global churches, as well as no unanimity on the part of delegates from the World churches. Latourette states that, among other things, Jerusalem was 'a reflection of the rising tide of resentment throughout the non-Western world against domination by the West.'<sup>151</sup> There was a realization on the part of many delegates that, despite the glowing words about partnership and 'church-centric' missions, there was still much difficult work to be done. Karl Heim, a German delegate, warned that the war had forever altered the way the world viewed Christianity and Western civilization, believing that there was no going back to the idea and ideal of 'Christendom':

The world war and the things which followed it have shaken forever the religious prestige of the white race. All those who came as soldiers from India or from Africa in the battlefields of Europe have discovered that the superiority of the white race is not founded on the Christian message, but on technical achievements (cannons, tanks, etc.), which can be used with much greater effect from a materialistic standpoint. Since the war we cannot say any longer to the non-Christians: Become Christians because Christianity brought to the nations of the West their historic greatness, their superior civilization, their advanced political institutions. We must separate our message from all these things.<sup>152</sup>

Dr. Datta, from India, agreed with Heim, stating that '[the] war was an upheaval such as India had never seen. During the four years of war one million Indian soldiers went overseas. These men came back with their outlook upon life completely changed. During this period in India itself demands for self-government were made.'<sup>153</sup> Cheng Ching-Yi warned, in a statement consistent with the thoughts of Roland Allen discussed earlier, that the days of the 'mission' should be ending soon:

[We] venture to think that the 'mission' is a temporary and not a permanent institution. We may regard the mission as a nurse engaged in looking after the children; the nurse is big, capable, kind, wise (sometimes not wise) in performing her task, but it is clear that it is not to be expected that a nurse will remain in the household forever. We believe that the relationship between the

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<sup>150</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 174.

<sup>151</sup> Latourette, 'Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council', p. 369.

<sup>152</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Addresses and Other Records*, pp. 110-111.

<sup>153</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Addresses and Other Records*, p. 98.

Christian Church in the East and the Christian Church in the West will, in the future, be a more direct one, requiring no such intermediary organization as the 'mission.'<sup>154</sup>

P.O. Philip of India spoke about money, funding, and the dependency of World churches, saying that while they were necessary at the beginning, they had become

both a help and a hindrance. After a certain stage, ... they become more of a hindrance than a help. I sometimes think it will be a good thing for the growth of the indigenous churches in India if by some cataclysm ...this flow of men and money from the churches of the West may be arrested, even for a short time. Only some such crisis will shake the Indian churches out of their all-too-complacent sense of dependence on the western churches, which at present operates as a dead weight on even our oldest and best-developed churches in India.<sup>155</sup>

However, not all nationals agreed with this sentiment. Thra San Ba, from Burma, noted that while financial independence should be the goal, '[there] are certain areas where the withdrawal of outside financial support will paralyze the work.'<sup>156</sup> While everyone seemed to agree that partnership and mutuality were goals to aim for, issues such as *authority*, finances, devolution, and autonomy were difficult issues to grapple with, and there was not complete unanimity among delegates as to how these goals should be achieved. Philip also warned both Western missions and World churches that, with nationalism growing in many places, the move toward greater freedom for World churches needed to be expedited or the entire matter might be out of their hands. In speaking specifically about conditions in India, Philip said that

[the] political and economic situation of the land ... contains within it the seeds of revolution and disruption, which at any unexpected minute may vitalize and fructify, and plunge the country into an entirely new situation, in which the indigenous churches may find themselves rudely cut adrift from the churches of their origin in the West. It is the path of wisdom, both for the churches of the West and for the indigenous churches, not to be taken unaware by any such crisis.... What the churches of the West can and should do, on a far larger scale than they have hitherto attempted, is to bring as fast as they can the great educational and training institutions ... under indigenous direction, so that the future leaders of the church may outgrow the evil traditions of dependence in which they now live and move and have their being, and become true leaders of their people.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 176.

<sup>155</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, pp. 178-179.

<sup>156</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 181.

<sup>157</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 179.

As one can see, most delegates at Jerusalem, representing the Global as well as the World churches, had a vision for what they hoped the future would bring; a very real hope for relationships far more equal than had existed in the past. They were also, however, very much aware of the real existential issues, both within and outside of the ecclesial sphere, would continue to make the realization of partnership very difficult to achieve.

In the midst of these issues, both positive and negative, one thing that was agreed upon was the continued need for missionaries. As the findings of the commission state, '[many] of the oriental and African delegates made it abundantly clear that workers from Europe and America were still needed, and would be needed for years to come.'<sup>158</sup> A delegate from India, K.T. Paul, stated that

I want to say in the clearest possible terms that the church in India does want missionaries, as many as you can send. I do not say this in a sentimental way or in blindness to many of the limitations which we observe often in missionaries, but in a plain matter-of-fact way.... The West comes to us in an imperialistic way and we resent that in an economic way and we suspect it. There also come to us culture and art and the message of Christ. As the spirit of nationalism grows and becomes self-confident we shall be able to discriminate between the ways in which the West has come.<sup>159</sup>

Paul went on to state that '[it] is the missionary, the human being who lives and loves in the ordinary everyday life of Christ, that is always welcome.... We want missionaries, Christlike missionaries who will come and live among us and identify themselves with us, who will share with us all our joys and sorrows in the spirit of Christ.'<sup>160</sup>

But while many nationals were asking for missionaries that would be, recalling the words of V.S. Azariah at Edinburgh (1910), friends, at least one delegate from the older churches, Siegfried Knak from Germany, felt that missionaries should still have places of *authority*:

Let the mission and the missionaries do the work that God has commanded them as long as they are out on the mission field. Let the educated and faithful missionaries work as leaders in the seminaries and colleges established for the education of the preachers for a long time, not in order to lay the burden of the dogmas of foreign theology upon the shoulders of the younger church, but in order to make the experience of the older churches available for the younger ones.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 184.

<sup>159</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 184.

<sup>160</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 185.

<sup>161</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 187.

It seemed that, while the continued need for missionaries was unanimous, there were still disagreements over the role of the missionaries and under whose *authority* they ultimately should fall.

Another issue, not directly discussed by the commission on the 'Younger and Older Churches' but still very important to the future of these relationships, was the place Jerusalem gave to social concern; or, as Yates put it, the proper theological understanding 'of the kingdom of God.'<sup>162</sup> While previous meetings had thought of missions 'in terms of geographic expansion ... Jerusalem pointed to large areas of life that must be brought effectively under the sway of Christian principles. In this Jerusalem extended the dimensions of traditional missionary thinking.'<sup>163</sup> At Jerusalem topics such as race relations and Christian missions' relationship to issues such as industrial and rural problems had entire commissions assigned to cover them. This emphasis, termed 'comprehensive', can be attributed to a number of causes; one being the Social Gospel movement, which gained credence, especially in America, with the publishing of Walter Rauchenbusch's *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917); another being the continued impact of the League of Nations and the 'sacred trust' to help develop those that needed assistance.

The divide between those that supported this expanded view of missions and those that did not was, to a large extent, geographical. Those who supported the 'comprehensive' approach tended to be Anglo-Americans; as Hogg states, 'the great majority of non-Continental entrusted with carrying out the missionary enterprise believed that as Christians they must take into account the whole life of those to whom they ministered. To do so meant concern for the social environment in which those lives were lived.'<sup>164</sup> The Continentals, however, 'remained deeply suspicious of the prevailing social tendencies as in the pre-war period. Ideas of human beings 'building' the kingdom of God ran counter to the theological recognition that it was and is *God's* kingdom.'<sup>165</sup> According to Bosch, it was the leadership of men like John Mott, Robert Speer, and J.H. Oldham who were able to find middle ground and 'bridge gaps where no communication appeared possible.'<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, p. 68.

<sup>163</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 251.

<sup>164</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 249.

<sup>165</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, p. 68.

<sup>166</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 324. As the years pass, finding middle ground between these extremes would become more and more difficult. By the Uppsala meeting of the World Council of



Ultimately, the Message of the Conference and its findings was unanimously supported; however, not everyone was convinced and subsequent events, such as the publishing of *Re-thinking Missions* (the findings of the Laymen's Foreign Mission Inquiry, see below pp. 188-191), would serve to reignite the debates. As Yates summarizes, '[the] "comprehensive" ideal had been adopted by the IMC but not necessarily by the missionary world....'<sup>167</sup>

Lastly, an issue that was not directly discussed at Jerusalem was to have a significant impact on the implementation of its decisions; how to convey what took place there to the constituencies back home, specifically to those from the Global Christian churches. Jerusalem had echoed the calls of Fleming that all churches should be both sending and receiving. Fleming had also said that if this was to happen, at least for the foreseeable future, the Global churches would have to finance this exchange: 'For many decades the peoples of the Orient and Africa may not be able to finance their spiritual representatives to us.... [For] years the West will have to take a large share in the financing of the world's spiritual interchange.'<sup>168</sup> But while those Global Christians at Jerusalem were well aware of the growing World churches and their calls for more autonomy, 'the man in the pew is scarcely aware that they exist. Insofar as he is thinking of the missionary matters at all, he is thinking in the old terms.'<sup>169</sup> For Chirgwin, if the movement made towards greater freedom for the World churches was going to be successful, the support of the general membership of the Global churches was essential:

Most missionary societies nowadays are trying to hand over authority to the indigenous Churches. That passage of responsibility is of the first importance to the strong fresh growth of the Churches that have been planted. But that transference cannot for long go any faster or further than the home boards permit; and the action of the boards is conditioned by the informed interest of the Churches they represent. They in turn cannot for long go faster or further than the Churches allow.... The man in the pew is therefore the man who matters. Everything depends upon whether he is hostile, indifferent or intelligently zealous. His goodwill is not enough; his informed goodwill is essential.<sup>170</sup>

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Churches in 1968, leaders like J. Hoekenkijk were taking about the kingdom of God and 'development' as synonymous terms. Many conservatives would soon leave the mainline ecumenical movement, joining instead the International Congress on World Evangelism, first held at Lausanne in 1974.

<sup>167</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, p. 70.

<sup>168</sup> Fleming, *Whither Bound in Mission?*, p. 39.

<sup>169</sup> Chirgwin, 'The Jerusalem Meeting and the Man in the Pew', p. 530.

<sup>170</sup> Chirgwin, 'The Jerusalem Meeting and the Man in the Pew', pp. 533-534. Others before had also spoken about the importance of educating the laity in raising awareness (and, ultimately, funds) for the missionary cause. Rufus Anderson wrote in 1874 that 'we must charitably suppose, that the apparent

Chirgwin proceeded to recommend '[the] need ... for a comprehensive scheme of missionary education for the whole Church (not merely for the zealous), for the whole year (not merely for an occasional weekend) and eventually for the whole community.'<sup>171</sup> And, according to Hogg, great effort was made by leaders in the ecumenical mission movement to educate the laity. He notes that Jerusalem 'led to literally hundreds of small conferences for pastors and for laymen in most of the countries from which delegates had gone to the Mount of Olives. At the level of the local congregation these sought to make vivid [its] spirit and findings.'<sup>172</sup> While the efforts made to inform and educate the *home base* after the meeting were commendable, the translating of events and decisions made at international ecumenical gatherings was to continue to be an issue. Although the leaders of both the Global and World churches continued to be at the forefront of the changes in the partnership dialogue, church members making up the *home base* of mission were to continue to think in 'the old terms'.

In many ways, both in the number of nationals present as well as the freedom of exchange and opinion evident in the records, Jerusalem was an advance over all previous conferences. The issues discussed and debated reflected the realities of the new post-World War I world, and the meeting looked for trends and tried to lay out strategies for the future. However, 'Jerusalem did not gamble with fixing the precise time when these future trends [would] take effect. ...[It] knew that technologies and new modes of thinking were reducing the globe to a metropolitan neighborhood and ... regional alliances were giving way to alliances "organized internationally."'<sup>173</sup> And while a world 'organized internationally' was recognized, it was also understood

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insensibility of so many real Christians to the enlargement and glory of their Redeemer's kingdom on earth, is not because their hearts are really cold and dead to the interest of that kingdom, but because they know so little about it' Anderson, *Foreign Missions: Their Relations and Claims*, p. 172; and Mott, in 1900, wrote that '[the] greatest hindrances to the evangelization of the world are those within the Church.' Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 49. What had changed, however, was the way in which mission was to be pursued. While a fundamental shift had taken place among missionaries (due in no small part to pressure from World church leaders), the vast majority of the *home base* were still viewing missions in the 'old terms.' This difficulty is easy to understand when remembering that, even while missionary leaders were beginning to call for equality and partnership with nationals overseas, blacks in America were still living with blatant racism and Jim Crow.

<sup>171</sup> Chirgwin, 'The Jerusalem Meeting and the Man in the Pew', p. 537.

<sup>172</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 257. Another such effort at education and promoting interest in mission came just on the heels of Jerusalem in the previously mentioned Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry. The results of this study were published in 1932 in a one volume edition entitled *Re-Thinking Missions*, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>173</sup> Utuk, *From Ibadan to New York*, p. 194.

that all sides needed to acknowledge the difficulties inherent in the actual working out of cross-cultural relationships. Delegates confessed that in seeking to apply what had been learned and agreed upon, there was no clear roadmap for success. In a discussion concerning relationships in India, it was admitted that, in aiming for more equitable relationships, the

arrangements that have come into existence between churches and missions have been in the nature of experiments. Therefore defects in their working are carefully noted by both parties concerned, and steps taken from time to time to remedy them. There can be no doubt that the relationship that is being established and developed in this way between the younger churches ... and the older churches ... is along the right path, which is the path of partnership.<sup>174</sup>

What was true for relationships in India was true for relationships in much of the rest of the world. Some churches were further advanced in maturing relationships, while others, especially in Africa, were far behind. And while Jerusalem was a large step forward, the 'experiments' in Global/World relations were about to be challenged by the crisis of a worldwide economic depression and another world war. A delegate from Canada, Dr. Endicott, closed the discussions on the relations between the Global and World churches with both an assessment of the current situation, as well as with hope:

We must not be misled into thinking there are no serious difficulties in the relations between the younger and the older churches. The people of other lands are quite aware of the difficulties, and I have not gone anywhere without realizing the sense of the need for deep changes. The native churches are concerned about this thing with which we are dealing, and rightly concerned. The time has come for action. I hope that we shall deal with this subject in such a way that it will be impossible to raise this question in a council of this kind again.<sup>175</sup>

Unfortunately events, both outside as well as within the church, would work against his wish being fulfilled, and the difficult problems associated with mutuality in relationships would resurface at many meetings to come.

### 5.7 Tracing the Four Themes

After the chaos and destruction of World War I, the world in which ecumenical partnerships took place was forever changed as colonial subjects began to

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<sup>174</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, pp. 198-199.

<sup>175</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, pp. 189-190.

increasingly question the moral authority of the so-called civilized nations of Global Christianity. Likewise, because the war was caused in large measure by the fight for control and access to resources and markets, issues of systemic power and their effects on the churches of Global and World Christianity, till now overlooked, came to be gradually more recognized.

In this changed world, Global church leaders also began to understand that many of the churches of World Christianity were beginning to mature, especially in Asia. And as the numbers of World Christians invited to participate at ecumenical gatherings increased, their contributions to the debates and discussions confirmed this perception. Global church leaders began to talk about ending paternalism and moving to partnership. Some, such as Fleming, went so far as to speak about the need for World Christians to come to the West to share their faith and spirituality with the *home base*. Yet, while those fortunate enough to have relationships with World church leaders spoke about changed relationships and ‘partnership’, many of the ‘people in the pews’, not able to experience or see the changes in World Christianity first hand, continued to think of mission as the expansion of Global Christianity. After Jerusalem (1928), while significant efforts at educating Global church constituencies on what had taken place led to hundreds of small conferences, little changed in the views of most Global Christians concerning their relationships with those from the World churches.

The growing maturity of many of the World churches, along with the damage done by the war to the moral certitude of the Global churches, also led to conflict around the issue of *authority*. At the earliest meetings of the IMC, and especially at Jerusalem, delegates from both the Global and World churches spoke to the need of devolving power to local church leaders, especially in regards to the control and use of finances. However, one problem in devolution, identified by Allen, was that many missionaries were in charge of ‘mission stations’, which put them in places of control as directors of churches and finances. Also, despite the voices calling for power to be shared, there were many who said that World churches were not ready or mature enough, thus there was by no means consensus on this issue. In any event, even those Global church leaders who advocated for some devolution still believed that they were the ones to decide who had reached maturity and who had not; it was still they who ultimately had *authority*.

The World church's growth also caused a wide gap to exist between the *rhetoric* of the various ecumenical meetings and the *reality* of the lived relationships between the Global and World churches. At the first meeting of the IMC in 1921, delegates admitted that all of the talk concerning 'three-selves' churches had not, in any meaningful way, been lived out. At Jerusalem, Mott had advocated for not only changed words but changed relationships. At the end of the conference, Endicott stated that he hoped that partnership could come quickly so that later ecumenical meetings would not have to deal with this issue again. Unfortunately, while during this period the numbers of World Christians invited to participate at mission conferences increased and the discussions that took place reflected the growing maturity and growth of the World churches, it was also realized by many that changed relationships would be a slow, methodical process. Thus, in *reality* there were few significant changes to the ways in which Global Christians related to their sisters and brothers in the World churches.

While the issue of *humanitarianism* is the least visible theme during this period, early signs of its later prominence are clearly discernable. American societies, gathered in 1922, stated that social service should be understood as a vital part of mission to others. This was followed up at Jerusalem when delegates, especially Anglo-Americans, call for 'comprehensive' mission, including studies on the issues of industrialization and rural problems. During this time, some Global Christian missionaries also began to emphasize the necessity of Western-style education if World Christians were ever going to be lifted out of poverty. As we will see in the next chapter, these efforts of development will grow stronger over the next decades.

## Chapter 6

### Partnership in a Time of Crisis

The Jerusalem (1928) conference was a high point in the understanding and dialogue between the churches of Global and World Christianity. At Edinburgh (1910), the idea of partnership was just germinating. Calls for mutuality and partnership were much more explicit at Jerusalem, although there was disagreement on methods and timeframes. Following the conference, expectations were high that both Global and World churches could use the momentum created there to move forward together, even if progress was to be slow and uneven. These expectations, however, were to be shattered by a number of events, including a world-wide economic depression, the rise of totalitarian regimes in many parts of the world, and a second world war. In the midst of these, and partly due to them, there was a continued increase in nationalistic fervor throughout the South that would, eventually, overturn the colonial maps that had held for decades. The partnership debate would continue; the world in which the debate took place was, however, entering a time of crises that would change the parameters of the debate forever.

As we will see, a key change in ecumenical relations during this time of crisis involved the growth in self-confidence, as well as the increased participation, of the World churches in the ecumenical movement. As Global Christianity struggled to adjust to this new reality, the four themes of the *home base, humanitarianism/development, authority, and rhetoric/reality* will all be prominent in the narrative.

#### 6.1 The Financial Crisis and its Effects

As the end of the 1920s approached, few could have predicted the time of financial crisis that was about to begin, especially in the United States. Although it was true that much of Europe was struggling financially during the 1920s, the United States economy had grown exponentially during and after the war. Blainey asserts that '[the] United States boomed for much of the 1920s. Shining cars poured onto the roads, and suburbs of new houses financed by a myriad of banks spread like a tide. The stock exchanges boiled and then simmered, for it was absurdly easy to borrow money for the purchase of shares.'<sup>1</sup> Harman gives a clear interpretation of how most people in the Western world felt towards the end of the decade: 'The world had been

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<sup>1</sup> Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p. 115.

through a dozen years of war, revolution and colonial rising. But by 1927 the consensus in international ruling class circles was that the trauma was over. There were not too many dissenters in the West when US president Coolidge declared in December 1928, “No Congress of the United States has met with a more pleasant prospect than that which appears at the present time.”<sup>2</sup> Few had any inkling of the horror to come.

The stock market crash occurred on October 24, 1929. As prices plunged, speculators busied themselves buying up shares, trying to take advantage of the falling prices. After buying, however, they soon found that prices had not bottomed out, and they too lost money on what they had assumed to be good deals. After ‘Black Thursday’, the cumulative effect of the crash was to paralyze the American economy. As Zinn states,

[after] the crash, the economy was stunned, barely moving. Over five thousand banks closed and huge numbers of businesses, unable to get money, closed too. Those that continued laid off employees and cut the wages of those who remained, again and again. Industrial production fell by 50 percent, and by 1933 perhaps 15 million – one-fourth or one-third of the labor force – were out of work. The Ford Motor Company, which in the spring of 1929 had employed 128,000 workers, was down to 37,000 by August 1931. By the end of 1930, almost half the 280,000 textile workers in New England were out of work.<sup>3</sup>

The economic collapse would have been bad enough if it had only affected the United States. However, because of the vast networks of trade and capital exchange that supported the world economic system, the stock market crash immediately affected the global economy, down to the local suppliers. As Brogan notes, ‘[all] the other nations depended on American success, and went down when it ended.’<sup>4</sup>

Ironically, while all of the Western nations, along with many people in the colonies who supplied the world markets with cheap labor and raw materials, suffered greatly during the depression, it was the people who lived on subsistence agriculture, who were seen by many Westerners to be primitive and backwards, that seemed to make out the best:

The slump sweeping across the globe did less damage in Africa, India, and wherever small farmers grew food only for themselves and their neighbors. A

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<sup>2</sup> Chris Harman, *A People's History of the World: From the Stone Age to the New Millennium* (London: Verso Books, 2008), p. 468.

<sup>3</sup> Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*, p. 387.

<sup>4</sup> Hugh Brogan, ‘The United States, 1900-1945’ in Michael Howard and William Roger Louis (eds.), *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 135.

central African tending a plot of maize for her family's use did not lose much, but the cousins growing coffee for the world market earned perhaps only half their former income. Malays working in a rubber plantation suffered because the demand for rubber tires slumped in all lands, but their neighbors growing rice, vegetables, and a few chickens for their own use were much less affected.<sup>5</sup>

The economic downturn that all countries and peoples faced after 1929 affected both domestic politics as well as international diplomatic and trade relationships. Internally, '[politics] was affected by the economic turmoil. In the year 1930 Prime Minister Hamaguchi of Japan was assassinated, Gandhi launched a campaign of civil disobedience in British India, Kurds rebelled along the borders of Persia and Turkey, Ethiopians staged a revolt against their emperor, and Jews and Arabs fought in Palestine. Everywhere people appealed to force.'<sup>6</sup> Internationally, the League of Nations had been set up to facilitate dialogue and cooperation among the world powers, as well as administer the countries that fell under the mandate system. The world economic collapse greatly diminished any chance of the League being successful at these tasks as countries raised tariffs and abandoned efforts of free trade:

The failure to build up a post-war system through which the most powerful countries could settle their differences and build coalitions against rule-breaking states might have been mitigated by economic good feeling. In the mid-1920s it looked as if the great commercial recovery would do this, and more. A dynamic world economy would draw America towards Europe, encourage liberalism in Germany, disarm Japanese fears, and keep the door ajar between the West and Russia. The fierce contraction of trade that set in by 1930 had the reverse effect.<sup>7</sup>

As countries and peoples throughout the world struggled to cope with the political and economic turmoil, it is not surprising that many began to question the very nature and presuppositions of the existing world order. Westernization, capitalization, and the modern world had, for almost a century, been based on Spencer's concepts of social evolution. Now, '[the] world depression, following the devastating world war, lowered confidence in the concept of human progress.'<sup>8</sup> Nationalism and cultural pride, which were already growing in many places before the economic downturn, intensified and, for many colonized peoples, led to calls for

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<sup>5</sup> Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, pp. 120-121.

<sup>6</sup> Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p. 121.

<sup>7</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 408.

<sup>8</sup> Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p. 122.



more independence and, in some cases, for statehood. As Darwin notes, 'it was not surprising that geopolitical and economic cleavages should have found a loud cultural echo.'<sup>9</sup>

In Asia, intensified nationalism led to both internal and external conflicts. In India, religious revivalism and Gandhianism led many to condemn the cumulative effects of colonialism on Indian society.<sup>10</sup> In Japan, increased industrialization, urbanization, and the impact of Western media 'produced symptoms of deep cultural anxiety. Events after 1930 seemed to confirm the alienness and bankruptcy of the international order imposed by the West on a reluctant East Asia.'<sup>11</sup> Japan, sensing that the time was right to move against the West, set out on a course to unite Asia under Japanese dominance. However, other Asians saw these Japanese attempts as simply trading one oppressor for another. As Iriye explains, '[the] basic problem with Japan's pan-Asianism ... was that it was not accepted by other Asians, least of all by the Chinese.'<sup>12</sup> For their part,

the Chinese were engaged in a serious task of nation-building, a task in which nationalistic opinion provided the glue.... In Manchuria (or the three Eastern Provinces, as the Chinese called the region), in particular, they were determined to undermine Japan's special interests by such means as building railways parallel to the Japan-controlled South Manchuria Railway and driving out Japanese and Korean farmers who had come in search of farmland.<sup>13</sup>

The Sino-Japanese conflict, which started with the dispute over Manchuria in 1931, became a full-fledged war in 1937.

In Africa, the mandated powers were to look after the 'peoples not yet able to stand themselves'; however, the economic depression

forced administrations to cut expenditures to the bone and missionary societies to close down schools and churches. In the 1930s producer prices fell by more than 60 per cent; markets and employment collapsed; in settler colonies savagely discriminatory measures were instituted to subsidize white farmers and cattle ranchers at the expense of the black. Across Africa there were tax riots, rural revolts, and boycotts of the market by cash-crop producers.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 409.

<sup>10</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 411.

<sup>11</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 411.

<sup>12</sup> Akira Iriye, 'East Asia and the Emergence of Japan, 1900-1945' in Michael Howard and William Roger Louis (eds.), *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 147

<sup>13</sup> Akira Iriye, 'East Asia and the Emergence of Japan, 1900-1945' p. 146.

<sup>14</sup> Terence Ranger, 'Africa' in Michael Howard and William Roger Louis (eds.), *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 267.

Voices critical of colonization and European supremacy on the continent began to arise, and many of these voices were black. In 1938 Jomo Kenyatta, who would become the first president of an independent Kenya in 1963, published the first anthropological study of an African ethnic group not written by a European. In *Facing Mount Kenya*, which focused on the Gikuyu (to which he belonged), Kenyatta wrote that

[there] certainly are some progressive ideas among the Europeans. They include the ideas of material prosperity, of medicine, and hygiene, and literacy which enables peoples to take part in world culture. But so far the Europeans who visit Africa have not been conspicuously zealous in imparting these parts of their inheritance to the Africans, and seem to think that the only way to do it is by police discipline and armed force. They speak as if it was somehow beneficial to an African to work for them instead of for himself, and to make sure that he will receive this benefit they do their best to take away his land and leave him with no alternative. Along with his land they rob him of his government, condemn his religious ideas, and ignore his fundamental conceptions of justice and morals, all in the name of civilisation and progress.<sup>15</sup>

Kenyatta believed that Africans should have the freedom to assimilate those aspects of Western culture that fit with African cosmology, as well as reject those that did not. According to Kenyatta,

[if] Africans were left in peace on their own lands, Europeans would have to offer them the benefits of white civilisation in real earnest before they could obtain the African labour which they want so much.... They would have to let the African choose what parts of European culture could be beneficially transplanted, and how far they could be adapted. He would probably not choose the gas bomb or the armed police force, but he might ask for some other things of which he does not get so much today.<sup>16</sup>

In the final words of his study, Kenyatta offered the colonial powers and Western countries that benefited from the exploitation of African labor and raw materials words of warning:

The African is conditioned by the cultural and social institutions of centuries, to a freedom of which Europe has little conception, and it is not in his nature to accept serfdom for ever. He realises that he must fight unceasingly for his own complete emancipation; for without this he is doomed to remain the prey of rival imperialism, which in every successive year will drive their fangs more deeply into his vitality and strength.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Jomo Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), p. 305.

<sup>16</sup> Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya*, pp. 305-306.

<sup>17</sup> Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya*, p. 306.

Economic depression, internal as well as external conflicts, and the rise of militant nationalism set the stage for world crisis. While the disruptions and conflict in the global South have been discussed, it was the rise of these in central Europe that led directly to the outbreak of another world war. In 1930, Mussolini ‘called for a revision of the Versailles treaty – the can of wriggling worms was opened wide. In Germany the same call for a revised treaty came from Hitler’s Brownshirts who, still far from winning power, had enough freedom to kill Jews in the first of many attacks in German towns.’<sup>18</sup> The hard peace pressed for by the victors at Versailles, which had harshly punished Italy and Germany, led to the rise of totalitarian regimes in both countries. Mussolini and Hitler, playing on the hopes, fears, and anger of their respective constituencies, rose to power and sought to reestablish their countries’ prestige and military might on the world stage. They would lead the world into another war that would again have great impact on the relationship of those in the North and South. As Harman states, ‘[the] 1930s was a decade in which the forces of hope and despair fought on the streets of every city. It was a decade when revolution and counter-revolution were at each other’s throats. It ended in a victory for counter-revolution which plunged the world into another war, accompanied by barbarities which put even the slaughter of 1914-18 in the shade.’<sup>19</sup>

## 6.2 Effects of the Crisis on the Jerusalem Mandates

Paton had stated, on the eve of the Jerusalem conference, that ‘something like a world society is coming into being.’<sup>20</sup> Within a few months after Jerusalem’s conclusion, all came to realize how connected and fragile this world society was. The reality that a global world order existed, that what happened on Wall Street had direct bearing on the wellbeing of rural Asians and Africans, was recognized not only by secular leaders, but those involved in missions as well:

In place of the old forces of the primitive agricultural economy the new order is taking shape under the pull and stress of such titanic energies as those of organized capital, organized labour, a far-reaching factory system, mass production of goods and wealth and the magnetic appeal of rapidly growing cities. Instead of the simple problems of isolated communities, the modern world, non-Christian as well as Christian, is faced by such unprecedented difficulties as world-wide economic crises, unemployment spreading over whole continents, the decline of entire industries such as agriculture, the

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<sup>18</sup> Blainey, *A Short History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p. 121.

<sup>19</sup> Harman, *A People’s History of the Third World*, p. 470.

<sup>20</sup> Paton, ‘The Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council’, p. 4.

sudden rise of great tidal waves of migrating humanity and the growth of militarism all over the earth.<sup>21</sup>

It was into this historical and cultural time of crisis and uncertainty that the leaders of both the Global and World churches wrestled with the issues of partnership and mutuality, seeking to build on the progress that had been made at Jerusalem.

When writing about the Jerusalem conference, Hogg states that it ‘marked a turning point from a widely held conception of missions as the foreign activity of Western churches. Instead, it provided a larger view of a Christian world mission carried out in partnership and full-cooperation between older and younger churches.’<sup>22</sup> This theme and understanding of partnership and cooperation continued to grow through the 1930s. And although these principles were agreed to by most, if not all, missionary leaders, the actual process of devolution was very much open for debate.

John Mott, writing in 1935, believed that Protestant mission had gone through stages. The first stage was a time of establishing mission churches and lasted up until Edinburgh (1910). The second period was transitional and was marked by slow but steady growth and maturity on the part of these churches. This stage incorporated the time between Edinburgh and Jerusalem. Now Mott believed that a third stage had been reached; ‘one in which the Christian forces related to the missionary enterprise pool not only knowledge and experience but also plans *in the making*, personalities, funds, names, and increasingly, administration. It is thus the period in which the implications of cooperation are taken, generally speaking, much more seriously than ever before.’<sup>23</sup> When looking back over this history, in much of which he was directly involved, Mott celebrated the growth of the IMC and of churches around the world. He remarked that, at the time of his writing, there were almost thirty national Christian councils around the world. And while half of these were in the lands of Global Christianity, ‘[the] other half are in the lands of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the island world.... When it is remembered that as recently as 1910 there were only two of these national bodies in existence, it will be recognized what a remarkable evolution there has been in the cooperative life of the missionary enterprise.’<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Harold E. Fey, ‘Missions and Machines’, *International Review of Missions* 21 (1932), p. 245.

<sup>22</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 254.

<sup>23</sup> John R. Mott, *Cooperation and the World Mission* (New York: International Missionary Council, 1935), p. 11.

<sup>24</sup> Mott, *Cooperation and the World Mission*, p. 18.

Along with the growth of these national bodies, it was also recognized that some of these, especially in Asia, were starting to make their own plans for church growth and expansion. Two of the most well known and celebrated of these initiatives were the 'Five Year Movement' in China and the 'Kingdom of God Movement' in Japan. The 'Five Year Movement' emphasized evangelism, literacy campaigns, religious education, rural development, and economic justice. And while this program was indigenous in its origin and administration, Cheng notes that the Chinese 'call upon our friends in the older Churches of the West to co-operate definitely with us in this great endeavor by a spirit of sympathy, of love and of prayer, so that both the older and younger Churches may unite in this essentially spiritual movement.'<sup>25</sup> The 'Kingdom of God Movement' in Japan, under the leadership of Toyohiko Kagawa, emphasized a different aspect of ministry each year for three years; in 1930 the emphasis was on evangelism, in 1931 on education, and in 1932 on economics. According to Kagawa,

[each] of these features is to go on permanently until its specific goal is reached, and moreover to lead on to larger accomplishment in its particular field. Evangelism is to continue until the million souls are won to the churches. Education is to continue until five thousand lay preachers have been trained. The first goal of the economic program is to win the eighteen hundred existing churches in Japan to active participation as branches in a nation-wide system of mutual aid sick insurance societies; then, through that small entering wedge, to induct the church members into the whole co-operative system.<sup>26</sup>

And like the 'Five Year Movement' in China, although this plan was conceived and administered by Japanese Christians, there was nonetheless a desire to have the assistance of the Global Christian churches. Kozaki notes that, as the plans were being put into place for this campaign, Kagawa was 'working more and more with the missionaries.'<sup>27</sup>

While these efforts were rightly celebrated, the actual process of missions handing over more responsibility and authority to the World churches continued to be debated. On the fact that devolution must take place, there was no doubt: '[every] Christian missionary enterprise must devolve or die. Of this there can be no question. Whatever the institution, unless it meets a local need and is increasingly controlled by

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<sup>25</sup> C.Y. Cheng, 'An Interpretation of the Five-Year Movement in China', *International Review of Missions* 20 (1931), p. 188.

<sup>26</sup> Toyohiko Kagawa, 'The Three Main Objectives of the Kingdom of God Movement', *International Review of Missions* 20 (1931), pp. 333-334.

<sup>27</sup> Michio Kozaki, 'Dr. Kagawa and the "Kingdom of God Movement"', *International Review of Missions* 18 (1929), p. 583.

local ideas and people it cannot long persist.<sup>28</sup> The issue, of course, was how this was to be lived out in practice. While it was mostly agreed that all financial and administrative responsibility should be given over as soon as possible, many missionaries were hesitant. Van Andel wrote that while this was understandable, underestimating the capacities of the World churches and their leaders would have to end: 'The hesitation of a mother to let go of her child who is learning to walk, and of parents to give their son an independent position, is easy to understand. So is the hesitation of a missionary to let the indigenous Christians decide independently on their affairs, but that hesitation must be overcome.'<sup>29</sup> It is interesting to note that the world financial crisis served to help speed this process along. As Hogg notes, the '[depression] brought sharp curtailment in missionary giving. Budgets were reduced. Many missionary activities were severely hampered and a few ceased. In many cases the once easy flow and transfer of funds was made difficult if not impossible.'<sup>30</sup> While there was still much discussion and debate of the process of devolution, in a very real way the financial constraints and budget contractions had a profound effect on the process, especially through the end of the Second World War.

Despite the work being done on all sides to build up the World churches, as well as move towards a common understanding of devolution, the Global missionary community continued to live in tension as to how to understand and practice partnership. At Jerusalem, Dr. Franklin of the American Baptist Mission said that '[the] hour had come for the passing from paternalism to partnership'<sup>31</sup> and there had been explicit calls for relationships of mutuality. This notwithstanding, many from the Global churches could not get away from seeing themselves as trustees over the growth and development of others. Whatever the good intentions of Global Christians, most mission practice reflected the prevailing view among them that it was their 'sacred trust' to assist more primitive peoples. As Friis notes, 'the activities of Christian missions on many points are based on principles in conformity with those approved by the League under the mandates system.'<sup>32</sup> And just as there were levels to the mandates system (A, B, and C), various peoples and cultures were viewed

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<sup>28</sup> Alden H. Clark, 'Devolution: A Study of Missionary Principles', *International Review of Missions* 18 (1929), p. 201.

<sup>29</sup> H.A. van Andel, 'The Devolution of the Work of Missions on to the Indigenous Christians', *International Review of Missions* 24 (1935), p. 353.

<sup>30</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, pp. 259-260.

<sup>31</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and the Older Churches*, p. 173.

<sup>32</sup> Finn T.B. Friis, 'Mandates and Missions', *International Review of Missions* 18 (1929), p. 553.

differently by missionaries. This, of course, was not new. From the time of Rufus Anderson and before, Asia and Africa had been seen as qualitatively different. Asians, definitely not the equals of Westerners, did however have developed cultures and great world religions, so while they were not as advanced as those in the West, at least they were on their way. But with the rise in nationalism throughout Asia, along with the work and leadership given by nationals like Kagawa, Cheng, and Azariah, the view of many Westerners was slowly changing. Noting the Japanese defeat of Russia in 1905, as well as boycotts on Western goods by both China and India that same year, the Indian church leader S.K. Datta wrote '[since] then the East has failed to relapse into her proverbial slumber. Over a score of years have gone by since this awakening; the insurgence of the East has become so far a permanent feature of international life.'<sup>33</sup> Nationals were not the only ones to notice that the relationships between East and West had changed. In writing about growing nationalism in India, McKenzie said that it should first be remembered that

the people of India do not endure with equanimity what they consider the stigma of being regarded as a subject people. It is curious that so many British people should find this difficult to understand, and that there should be so much surprise that the benefits of British rule are not more fully appreciated. Is it not just what we should expect in a people of high intelligence and keen sensitiveness, moving toward freedom but not yet free, that they should resent the very existence of the last vestiges of foreign domination, however benevolent? ...Added to the resentment that is felt at the continuance of the mere fact of political determination from without is the widespread and growing belief that Great Britain holds India for purposes of economic exploitation, that she intends still to hold India for these purposes, and that there is no sincerity in any promises made to the contrary.<sup>34</sup>

McKenzie goes on to say that he was 'convinced that if the people of India could be made to feel that the British people really desired to co-operate with them not as superiors but as equals in the work of providing for the future government of the land, there is the possibility of a co-operation far richer and more beneficial than any we have known in the past.'<sup>35</sup> The peoples of the East had asserted themselves and had, in some people's eyes, earned the right to be treated equitably.

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<sup>33</sup> S.K. Datta, 'Inter-racial Relationships in the Far East', *International Review of Missions* 19 (1930), p. 398.

<sup>34</sup> John McKenzie, 'The Present Situation in India', *International Review of Missions* 19 (1930), pp. 532-533.

<sup>35</sup> McKenzie, 'The Present Situation in India', p. 537.

Africans on the other hand, despite the words and warnings by Kenyatta and others, were still viewed by many as people 'with few ideas'. And because of this, it was assumed that they could do no more than imitate what whites were teaching them. In writing about the effects of modern life and the process of denationalization, Baudert says that

[whoever] has watched the penetration of European civilization into Africa has seen the triumphal march of the motor car, the umbrella, and khaki clothes, and it still appears to him a question of how much original sound African tribal custom can be saved among a people who have in their blood a passion for imitation. What childish pleasure they have in 'dressing-up' – for one can hardly use any other term for the African style of dress in wide areas to-day. They are like our own children playing at acting.<sup>36</sup>

Richter, the German missiologist, felt much the same when writing on education in Africa:

One of the most pronounced talents of the African is his power of imitation. His education must make contact with this highly developed gift.... What the African likes is to imitate the European in everything. He wants to speak the same language, go to the same schools, pass the same examinations. Would it not then be simplest to base the Negro's education on the fact that he is a potential Frenchman, Portuguese, Englishman, who merely by accident has a brown or black skin?<sup>37</sup>

Very few missionary voices dissented from the above opinions.

One voice that did, however, was J.L.C. Horstead, who taught at Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone. He felt that relationships and trust between European and African colleagues needed to be established for the work to be successful: 'The work of the Christian Church will remain that of organization and administration rather than that of sharing vital spiritual experiences unless we get on sufficiently intimate terms with our African colleagues to lay ourselves bare to them and accept the honour of the same intimacy in return.'<sup>38</sup> Acknowledging that the process of devolution from European to African would be a slow process, he advocated not only the importance of working with African colleagues, but socializing with them as well:

It is not often that the missionary is seen as one who is simply enjoying life for life's sake – too frequently he is known only as one who has come to do the people good – and it is a happy revelation to some to see that he or she does

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<sup>36</sup> S. Baudert, 'Thoughts and Reflections on the Education of Africans', *International Review of Missions* 20 (1931), pp. 530-531.

<sup>37</sup> Julius Richter, 'Missionary Work and Race Education in Africa', *International Review of Missions* 18 (1929), pp. 79-80.

<sup>38</sup> J.L.C. Horstead, 'Co-operation with Africans', *International Review of Missions* 24 (1935), p. 210.



really enjoy a joke like the rest of mankind. It is also a real step towards fellowship when the missionary takes his recreation with his African friends and does not feel that he can only relax when he congregates with his fellow countrymen.<sup>39</sup>

Unfortunately, voices such as Horstead's were very rare in this period of time. The movement towards partnership and mutuality, despite glowing words and resolutions to the contrary, would continue to be painfully slow, especially for Africa. Despite the fact that the facade of a Christian West had been proven false, many in the West, both outside the church as well as within, would still seek ways to maintain hegemony as they tried to develop others in their image. This dichotomy between *rhetoric* and *reality*, between pronouncements made and good intentions on the one hand and actions on the other by those that controlled resources and, ultimately, power, would continue to cause tension and conflict in the world as well the international church. These feelings of cultural superiority were not new. What had changed, however, was that, more and more, those on the receiving end of trusteeship were challenging Western notions of superiority and paternalism.

Despite these issues, both missionaries as well as delegates from the World churches present at Jerusalem were unified in stating that the need for Western missionaries was still very real. This sentiment continued throughout the 1930s. In writing about work in China, Warnshuis wrote that

[contrary] to the frequently quoted advice that the missionary should aim at withdrawing as soon as possible, he ought to make himself indispensable because of the character and quality of his work. The work that other men can do should indeed be turned over to them, and support should be given to training men for it; but this does not mean that there is nothing left for the strong missionary to do.... The work of such missionaries will be much more varied than that of their predecessors. They will have much less to do with administrative routine, and much more personal service.... The old-fashioned mission and station organizations should be abolished, so that the individual missionary may be freed from the entanglements of a foreign organization and available for personal service.<sup>40</sup>

Brumbaugh made a similar statement, saying that '[the] greatest needs in missionaries to-day are humility, patience, and perseverance.'<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Horstead, 'Co-operation with Africans', p.211.

<sup>40</sup> A.L. Warnshuis, 'Some Observations on Missions in the Far East', *International Review of Missions* 21 (1932), pp. 262-263.

<sup>41</sup> T.T. Brumbaugh, 'Lessons in Missionary Devolution', *International Review of Missions* 26 (1937), p. 393.

Along with calls for missionaries who would be willing to serve, it was realized that if partnership was to become a reality, issues such as the comfortable lifestyles of most missionaries as compared to the nationals they served would have to be addressed. Van Doren, in writing about missionary housing, said that '[the] fact is that in the eyes of Indians the missionary bungalow, however simple from the western standpoint, stands not for self-denial and sacrifice but for the possession of innumerable things desirable and desired....'<sup>42</sup> And while she admitted that there were no easy answers or solutions, she did ask for missionaries and societies to at least look realistically at the issues facing them: 'We may see no way to change our present mode of life, but let us at least admit that there is a need for such change. We may be unable to solve the problem, but let us cease denying that a problem exists.'<sup>43</sup>

As has been shown, the situations in Africa were viewed as very different from Asia, so while in Asia calls were for missionaries who would be willing to *serve*, it was believed that most churches in Africa were still in need of missionaries to *lead*. Richter warned that although 'the development of autonomous Churches is the goal of missionary work, it must be remembered that long years of barbarism, and contact with other white people who despise the Negro, make it highly desirable that for some time to come white missionaries should remain in positions of influence in their church organization.'<sup>44</sup> As at Jerusalem, while everyone agreed that missionaries were still necessary, the type of missionary needed continued to be open for debate.

After the Jerusalem Conference, the issue of mission as *humanitarianism* became more pronounced. Jerusalem had put a strong emphasis on what has been termed 'comprehensive' missions; that missions should not only be concerned with the spiritual aspects of life, but that social and economic factors must be addressed as well. The Department of Social and Industrial Research, born out of these discussions, was established in 1930 under the direction of J. Merle Davis. This department had two main functions:

First, it provided an information service for missions. Through the International Labour Office it gathered (and gave) considerable information on matters affecting the younger churches (*e.g.*, narcotics, mandated territories, forced labour, slavery, and child welfare). Second the Department conducted extensive field research. Dr. Davis led a three-man commission which during

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<sup>42</sup> Alice B. van Doren, 'Experimentation in Modes of Living in the Mission Field', *International Review of Missions* 19 (1930), p. 442.

<sup>43</sup> Van Doren, 'Experimentation in Modes of Living in the Mission Field', p. 444.

<sup>44</sup> Richter, 'Missionary Work and Race Education in Africa', p. 82.

1932 spent six months in Africa assessing the impact of industrial civilization on the life of the African.... The resulting study, *Modern Industry and the African*, met with gratitude and acclaim from government officials, industrialists, educators, and mission boards.<sup>45</sup>

As we will see, the work done by Davis and his department would contribute significantly to the discussions and deliberations at Madras in 1938.

Due to the fact that over eighty percent of the World churches in Asia and Africa were in rural areas, another endeavor that came out of Jerusalem was the interest in studying rural missions. Dr. Kenyon Butterfield, who had been president of the college of agriculture at both the University of Massachusetts and Michigan State University, was asked to serve as a volunteer missionary and lead this program. Butterfield spent two years in Asia, primarily in India and China, studying rural communities. He saw his work as important, not only in assisting the World churches, but also in building up efforts of cooperation between churches in all lands. To Butterfield, the study of rural missions was not simply 'a department of activity, such as educational, medical or agricultural missions. It is the whole Christian enterprise, in all its departments and phases, at work among village populations. It is therefore inclusive of all endeavors of the older western Churches and peoples to cooperate with the younger eastern Churches and peoples in progress towards a Christian rural civilization.'<sup>46</sup> The efforts of the Global churches to understand and assist the World churches in the area of economics would continue to be important, especially as the financial depression greatly affected the World churches and their financial viability.

Finally, Global church delegates at Jerusalem understood the necessity of interpreting its message and findings for the *home base*. At Jerusalem, Chirgwin had noted that although there had been great advance in calls for partnership and devolution, the 'transference cannot for long go any faster or further than the home boards permit; and the action of the boards is conditioned by the informed interest of the Churches they represent.'<sup>47</sup> And although plans had been made for sharing with church members what had taken place at the conference, the lack of interest in international mission on the part of most church members continued to be a problem.

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<sup>45</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 272.

<sup>46</sup> Kenyon L. Butterfield, 'Rural Work and Mission Policy', *International Review of Missions* 21 (1932), p. 412.

<sup>47</sup> Chirgwin, 'The Jerusalem Meeting and the Man in the Pew', pp. 533-534.

John Mott, writing in 1931, continued to espouse ‘the imperative need of liberating more largely the all-too-latent forces and relating them to the plans of the world mission. Unless I am mistaken, we have in this matter lost ground in recent years.’<sup>48</sup> Mott believed that much of the problem was due to the lack of lay leadership in the work of the mission societies themselves, especially young laity: ‘As I came to close quarters with the missionary societies I was shocked to find in these managing bodies so few laymen under forty years of age.’<sup>49</sup> He felt that it was vital to address this shortage of lay leadership because ‘a sense of responsibility and active participation on the part of the laymen themselves are essential in the work of generating confidence and enlisting the co-operation of multitudes among the millions of lay members who to-day are totally indifferent to the missionary obligation and challenge.’<sup>50</sup> Mott warned, however, that even though a large number of laypersons were needed, mission societies should be very discerning; only those who had the vision and the gifts necessary should be asked. And, according to Mott,

[what] should increasingly characterize the leadership demanded? Without doubt it should reveal true comprehension, that is an appreciation of the present expansive, urgent and perilous world situation; an awareness of the greatly changed psychology of the peoples whom we are called upon to serve; a grasp of the real issues in the realm of thought and action which profoundly affect the world mission; ... and understanding of our times.’<sup>51</sup>

As one reads Mott’s analysis of the current issues involved in strengthening support for mission among the *home base*, it is clear that this veteran missionary statesman was, in general, quite worried about the state of support societies were receiving. There was, however, one positive element he could note: ‘One of the most encouraging developments of the very recent past has been the initiative taken by groups of prominent laymen of seven denominations in America. After thorough-going consideration they have constituted themselves into a joint committee to try to discover and re-state the present-day responsibilities of the laymen of their respective communions in relation to the world mission.’<sup>52</sup> It is to this initiative, and its controversial findings, that we now turn.

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<sup>48</sup> John R. Mott, ‘Strengthening the Home Base’, *International Review of Missions* 20 (1931), p. 93.

<sup>49</sup> Mott, ‘Strengthening the Home Base’, p. 93.

<sup>50</sup> Mott, ‘Strengthening the Home Base’, p. 94.

<sup>51</sup> Mott, ‘Strengthening the Home Base’, pp. 109-110.

<sup>52</sup> Mott, ‘Strengthening the Home Base’, p. 96.

### 6.3 The Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry

The Laymen's Missionary Movement had been in existence before the meeting at Edinburgh (1910) and was a movement inspired by similar organizations such as the Student Volunteer Movement. During and after World War I the movement had 'largely contracted, and in some fields even disbanded.'<sup>53</sup> However, considering the many changes and crises ongoing in both the world and international mission, there was a call to reinstitute the movement; thus, '[in] January 1930, a group of laymen of one denomination met in New York to consider these problems.'<sup>54</sup> It was quickly seen that the problems being investigated were common to the whole missionary movement, so the inquiry was expanded to include seven different denominations, each allowed five representatives.<sup>55</sup> It was decided that, for the sake of expenses as well as time, an area restricted geographically to India, Burma, China, and Japan would be surveyed. Committees were formed and each was given a topic of study to address. These included the ongoing relationship between Global church mission and the World churches, education (all levels), literature, medical work, agriculture and rural life, industrialization, the place of women, and administration and organization. The committee members left the United States in September 1931 and returned in July 1932. The materials and reports were then collected and the findings published. As Yates notes, '[the] seven volumes of data, consisting of regional reports (volumes I-III) and "fact-finders" reports (volumes IV-VII) contain an astonishingly full and extensive range of materials, not least when in view of the short period of time in which the research was done.'<sup>56</sup> The materials were also condensed and published into the one volume book *Rethinking Missions*, edited by the chairman of the committee, William E. Hocking.

For the purposes of the study of partnership, the inquiry is rich in findings. First, the report was very supportive of the 'comprehensive' approach to mission, so prevalent at Jerusalem. The report said that 'the welfare of the individual's soul or directing self cannot be secured in complete independence of the welfare of his body,

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<sup>53</sup> Mott, 'Strengthening the Home Base', p. 93.

<sup>54</sup> William Ernest Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry After 100 Years* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1932), p. x. The denomination involved was the Northern Baptist.

<sup>55</sup> These seven denominations were the Northern Baptist, Congregational, Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Protestant Episcopal, Reformed Church in America, and the United Presbyterian Church.

<sup>56</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, p. 71.

his mind, his general social context.’<sup>57</sup> According to the report, the disagreements over how to define evangelism which had been present at Jerusalem and before made no sense in the world any longer: ‘Ministry to the secular needs of men in the spirit of Christ *is evangelism*, in the right use of the word. For to the Christian no philanthropy can be mere secular relief.’<sup>58</sup>

When looking at the issue of devolution, the report listed two problems that inhibited the process. First was

the rapid growth of the nationalistic spirit. The people of the Orient have developed an intense desire to manage their own affairs.... They are eager – sometimes too eager – for positions of authority, and while they nearly always contend that the West’s financial assistance is still needed, they commonly believe themselves entirely competent to administer funds as well as to provide intellectual and spiritual leadership.<sup>59</sup>

The second obstacle to successful devolution was ‘the natural reluctance of missionaries to withdraw from fields of labor to which they have devoted the best years of their lives. This reluctance is all too likely to result in the rationalization that the Christian nationals are not yet ready for responsibility, although to a disinterested observer competent native leadership appears to be available.’<sup>60</sup> To remedy the situation, the report called for three steps to be taken. First, ‘[devolution] should be real, not nominal.... [Unfortunately] there have been cases in which missionaries have adopted measures which nominally transferred authority and responsibility to nationals, but which in reality had no such effect.’<sup>61</sup> Second, ‘[in] anticipation of devolution nationals should be trained by participation for the assumption of responsibility. There have been cases in which ... responsible authority has been abruptly transferred to nationals who were unprepared to assume it.’<sup>62</sup> And thirdly, the report noted that ‘the best way to accomplish devolution is not by the “handing over” from time to time of one project or institution after another, but a gradual coalescence of the missionary and national elements in the control of all the activities of a mission, and the subsequent gradual withdrawal of the missionary participants.’<sup>63</sup>

Finally, the report also addressed the long discussed issue of ‘self-support’.

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<sup>57</sup> Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, p. 65.

<sup>58</sup> Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, p. 68.

<sup>59</sup> Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, p. 305.

<sup>60</sup> Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, p. 305.

<sup>61</sup> Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, p. 305.

<sup>62</sup> Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, p. 306.

<sup>63</sup> Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, p. 306.

While the term was still relevant for discussion in missionary circles, it was reported that because it was used in so many ways, it was basically pointless as a gauge for measuring a church's maturity: 'The lack of accurate financial records and the loose use of the term "self-support" make it impossible to give comprehensive figures or to make close comparisons between denominations. Many churches are "self-supporting" only because they pay nothing toward the support of cooperating missionaries and derive a considerable fraction of their receipts from mission employees.'<sup>64</sup> With no reliable data to go on, and with so many definitions of 'self-support', the report advised a general principle by which the financial relationships between a church and mission should be judged: 'The most advisable relation between them is one that gives the church the largest freedom to develop its own autonomous life unhampered by external authority and at the same time gives the leaders of the church the largest opportunity to draw upon the accumulated wisdom and intelligent guidance of Christians from abroad.'<sup>65</sup> And for those missionaries who had difficulty in adjusting to this new environment, the report stated unequivocally that, under all circumstances, 'the mission council should be thought of as a temporary expedient and as a preparatory stage. It is extremely important that the mission group, however named or organized, should be a spiritual band of friends and helpers, not an instrument of *authority* or of foreign control.'<sup>66</sup>

Unfortunately, the report drew intense opposition from many quarters, with much of this opposition directed at the chairman of the inquiry. Hocking, a professor at Harvard and Congregational layman, had for years 'occupied himself with questions relating to world community, the future co-existence of world religions and the search for a form of unity that would not surrender variety.'<sup>67</sup> In the Laymen's Report, Hocking had included his ideas on 'sharing', by which he meant 'spreading abroad what one has: ... sharing becomes real as it becomes mutual, running in both directions, each teaching, each learning, each with the other meeting the unsolved problems of both.'<sup>68</sup> Hocking believed that God could be seen and experienced in all cultures and peoples, and that Westerners had much to learn from non-Westerners and their cultures. However, to many, Hocking seemed to be questioning the centrality of

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<sup>64</sup> Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, p. 88.

<sup>65</sup> Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, p. 107.

<sup>66</sup> Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, pp. 107-108.

<sup>67</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, p. 72.

<sup>68</sup> Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions*, p. 46.

Jesus for salvation, and hence the very basis of missions. Robert E. Speer, who wrote a critical response to the Laymen's Report entitled "*Rethinking Missions*" Examined, wrote that '[for] us, Christ is still *the* Way, not *a* way, and there is no goal beyond Him or apart from Him, nor any search for truth that is to be found outside of Him, nor any final truth to be sought by a universal religious quest, except it be sought in Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.'<sup>69</sup>

Others like Guy Sarvis questioned how realistic it was to expect genuine and reciprocal sharing: 'So long as there are missionaries, they will go primarily "not to be ministered unto, but to minister" – and ministry is giving and bearing and serving and loving. If there is return, it is well; but the return must always be secondary and incidental.'<sup>70</sup> Sarvis, in a view that shows clearly the limitations of Global Christianity, went on to question not only the need but even the desire for cultural and religious exchange:

What of cultural exchange between sending and receiving lands? Specifically, what reason is there to expect significant interaction between oriental and occidental religions? Assuming that missionaries have been really successful in transplanting Christianity, what reason is there to expect a reciprocal process? To state the matter more sharply, what aspects of African fetishism may we expect to be incorporated in the life and thought of the worshippers at the City Temple or the Broadway Tabernacle?<sup>71</sup>

Unfortunately, for many the theological focus on the centrality of Christ and Christianity's relationship to other religions became the focus of the report at the expense of the practical, relational observations, recommendations, and findings. Nonetheless, the Laymen's Inquiry is important in the study of partnership in that it gave 'firm support and backing ... to the younger churches in their search for independence and indigenisation.'<sup>72</sup>

#### 6.4 Partners in the Expanding Church

Another helpful document in seeking to understand the development of partnership after Jerusalem is the study entitled *Partnership in the Expanding Church* by A.L. Warnshuis and Ester Strong. Warnshuis and Strong state that

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<sup>69</sup> Robert E. Speer, "*Rethinking Missions*" Examined (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1933), p. 31.

<sup>70</sup> Guy W. Sarvis, 'The Principle of Sharing in Missions', *International Review of Missions* 23 (1934), p. 248.

<sup>71</sup> Sarvis, 'The Principle of Sharing in Missions', p. 248.

<sup>72</sup> Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century*, p. 93.



[on] every hand heartening signs of growth have appeared in the assumption by the younger churches of a larger share of responsibility in this partnership. An awareness of changes in the relations between younger and older churches since the Jerusalem Meeting led to the request for some definite and accurate information regarding them. This paper is the response to that request.<sup>73</sup>

The authors felt that there were two tasks that their study needed to fulfill. First, 'there is the duty of making successful experience more widely known. No mission or church should be left in comparative isolation in trying to work out the necessary adjustment of relationships in the developing partnership between the younger and older churches',<sup>74</sup> Secondly, and most importantly for the *home base*, 'there is the duty of educating Christian people everywhere to this view of missions, and of increasing the number of those supporters who are willing to give their means and their personal service....'<sup>75</sup>

The report touched on a number of issues. First, when looking at the growth of the World churches since Jerusalem, '[essentially] the development that is noted is the growing strength of self-conscious life in these churches. This does not necessarily involve the separation of the younger church from its parent, but rather the establishment of a relationship so adjusted as to recognize the mature responsibility of the younger church for all its life and work.'<sup>76</sup> In looking at the issue of self-support, the report noted that '[in] recent years, the economic depression has given added impetus to the advancing movement to develop plans and methods that will terminate the giving of subsidies for unlimited periods and that will have as their aim only such use of foreign money as will supplement and stimulate the largest possible measure of self support.'<sup>77</sup> Although the report listed a number of efforts by various denominations striving for self-support, it was admitted that much still needed to be done on this front. The report also challenged the Global churches to be careful in how much they tried to control monies which they sent, for 'foreign money itself is not necessarily evil, but ... the way in which it is used is often most harmful to the life and growth of the younger churches.'<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> A.L. Warnshuis and Ester Strong, *Partners in the Expanding Church: A Review of the Developing Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches, Since the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council* (New York: Foreign Missions Conference of North America, 1935), p. 3; hereafter cited as *Partners in the Expanding Church*.

<sup>74</sup> Warnshuis and Strong, *Partners in the Expanding Church*, p. 5.

<sup>75</sup> Warnshuis and Strong, *Partners in the Expanding Church*, p.5.

<sup>76</sup> Warnshuis and Strong, *Partners in the Expanding Church*, p. 6.

<sup>77</sup> Warnshuis and Strong, *Partners in the Expanding Church*, p. 18.

<sup>78</sup> Warnshuis and Strong, *Partners in the Expanding Church*, p. 29.

When looking at the role of the missionary, the authors felt that partnership meant ‘a decreasing share in executive administration, a renewed emphasis upon personal evangelism, and the development of new relationships as counselors and specialized forms of service.’<sup>79</sup> They also noted that the missionaries should be ‘much more of a colleague and much less a director.’<sup>80</sup> Finally, in echoing one of the findings of the Hocking Report, it was said that devolution needed to be authentic so as to actually transfer power and decision making into the hands of the World churches. If not, ‘the younger church may be more concerned about its relations to New York and London and about the administration of foreign funds than about its primary responsibility for the pastoral care of its own membership and for effective evangelistic work in its own community.’<sup>81</sup>

In closing, the report noted positive trends in the development of Global/World church partnerships. First, it affirmed that ‘through all these developments there is apparent the steady and encouraging growth in independence and responsibility on the part of the younger churches and a willingness and eagerness on the part of the missionaries to coöperate [sic] by taking their place under the direction of national leaders.’<sup>82</sup> In addition, despite continuing issues concerning the lack of support from the traditional *home base*, the report also quite confidently believed that ‘[there] is abundant evidence ... that those who support foreign missions ... are more than responsive to the new view and are willing to give real control in the administration of funds raised in Britain to properly constituted bodies in the younger churches.’<sup>83</sup> Unfortunately, while providing an invaluable glimpse at the development of thinking and practice concerning partnership in the 1930s, Warnshuis and Strong were probably a bit too positive. While they were calling for partnership to reflect mutuality and respect, the dominant motif continued to be that of trusteeship. These issues, pertaining both to relationships and, most especially, finances, would continue to be problematic for both Global and World churches.

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<sup>79</sup> Warnshuis and Strong, *Partners in the Expanding Church*, p. 30.

<sup>80</sup> Warnshuis and Strong, *Partners in the Expanding Church*, p. 31.

<sup>81</sup> Warnshuis and Strong, *Partners in the Expanding Church*, p. 40.

<sup>82</sup> Warnshuis and Strong, *Partners in the Expanding Church*, p. 57.

<sup>83</sup> Warnshuis and Strong, *Partners in the Expanding Church*, p. 58.

### 6.5 The Madras Meeting of the International Missionary Council (1938)

As previously discussed, some at Jerusalem hoped that the issues of partnership and mutuality, even though admittedly difficult to grapple with, could be solved in the not-so-distant future so that it would 'be impossible to raise this question in a council of this kind again.'<sup>84</sup> That hope, however, proved to be far too optimistic. While there were some improvements in relations and several World churches were taking on more and more responsibility, the cumulative effects of previously noted events, both external as well as internal to the international missionary movement, made the achievement of Jerusalem's goal of moving from 'paternalism to partnership' quite difficult to put into practice.<sup>85</sup> As delegates gathered in Madras, India, in December 1938, they realized that it would take more than *rhetoric* to effect change; there was much to be done if the calls made a decade earlier were to be put into practice.

Originally the idea for another meeting, in line with those of Edinburgh and Jerusalem, was raised in 1934 at a meeting of the *Ad Interim* Committee of the IMC.<sup>86</sup> There had been marked growth from Edinburgh to Jerusalem in both the number of participants from the World churches, as well as their participation, and the IMC wanted to see this growth continue. Two decisions were made to this end. First, the IMC hoped that the conference could be hosted in one of the lands of the World churches. As Mott notes, '[invitations] were extended by three Asiatic countries – Japan, China, and India. That of China was accepted, [but] with the breaking out of the serious troubles in the Far East, it became clear ... that the meeting would have to be transferred to some other country. After wide enquiry, general approval was

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<sup>84</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, pp. 189-190.

<sup>85</sup> At Madras, it was noted that '[when] the International Missionary Council met at Jerusalem ten years ago, the faith was strong that a new and better world had been born amidst the destruction of the Great War, and that the Church might lead in building it up. To-day, that faith is shattered. Everywhere there is war or rumour of war. The beast in man has broken forth in unbelievable brutality and tyranny. Conflict and chaos are on every hand, and there is little hope that statesmanship can do more than check temporarily their alarming speed.' *The World Mission of the Church: Findings and Recommendations of the Meeting of the International Missionary Council, Tambaram, Madras, India, December 12-29, 1938* (London: International Missionary Council, 1939), p. 15; hereafter cited as *Tambaram Meeting: The World Mission of the Church*.

<sup>86</sup> The Committee of the Council met three times between Jerusalem and Madras; in 1929 at Williamstown, in 1932 at Herrnhut, and in 1935 at Northfield. Due to financial constraints, the Committee of the Council, meeting at Herrnhut, elected an *Ad Interim* Committee to facilitate the work between meetings. Dr. C.Y Cheng (from China) and Bishop Azariah (from India) were two of the original members; however, Hogg notes that '[in] 1935 the non-staff members of the *Ad Interim* Committee were increased from seven to ten, providing for greater representation of the younger churches.' Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 261.

secured for holding the meeting in India....<sup>87</sup> The second important decision taken by the council was that at least half of the delegates should come from the lands of the World churches. According to the official report of the conference, '[only] in such a meeting, roughly equal in the representation of East and West, of "older" and "younger" ... could there be a world consultation upon the task of the Church such as these times urgently demanded.'<sup>88</sup> In the end, according to Paton, '[the] national delegations ... amounted to a total of 377, and of these 191 were nationals of the lands of the younger Churches and 186 were nationals of the lands of the older Churches.'<sup>89</sup> India, as the host country, had the largest delegation, and China the second largest. It is also important to note that more nationals from Africa attended Madras than had been present at any previous meeting. According to Utuk, '[this] reflected the fact that, during the decade 1928-1938, such leaders were beginning to emerge. Native Africans who were present included Christian G. Baeta from the Gold Coast, B.A. Ohanga of Kenya, A.B. Akenyele and M.O. Dada of Nigeria, T.S.C. Johnson of Sierra Leone, Y.K. Bina and K.L. Kisosonke of Uganda, Chief A.J. Lutuli and Miss Mina Soga of South Africa.'<sup>90</sup> Paton firmly believed that this decision to include so many from the World churches was not simply for show:

[The] delegations from the younger Churches were in every case well worthy of their place and that there was no filling up on numbers for the sake of appearance. Indeed the main impression left on many of the western delegates, especially on those of them who had had relatively slight contact with the younger Churches, was of the reality of the church life, the depth of conviction and keenness in witness of these younger brethren in the Faith.<sup>91</sup>

At Jerusalem, the focus began to shift away from 'missions' to a more 'church-centric' approach. Madras not only continued this trend, but enlarged it by giving more attention to the building up and strengthening of the World churches:

From the beginning it was determined that the central theme of the meeting should be the upbuilding of the younger churches as a part of the historic universal Christian community.... In some quarters the wisdom was doubted – in regions where there was as yet only a tiny Church and virtually all Christian

<sup>87</sup> John Mott, 'At Edinburgh, Jerusalem, and Madras', *International Review of Missions* 27 (1938), p. 312.

<sup>88</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Mission of the Church*, p. 6.

<sup>89</sup> William Paton, 'The Meeting of the International Missionary Council at Tambaram, Madras', *International Review of Missions* 28 (1939), p. 162. The total number of delegates was 471, and these represented sixty-nine different countries or territories. The number of total delegates (471) includes those co-opted for their special expertise in certain fields, as well as the staff necessary to run the conference. These are not included in the total listed for national delegates (377).

<sup>90</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 199.

<sup>91</sup> Paton, 'The Meeting of the International Missionary Council at Tambaram, Madras', p. 163.

work was still in the narrower sense 'missionary' work; in other quarters where it was felt that 'Church' meant an absorption in the problems of the ecclesiastical institution. But it came to be generally agreed that nothing was so vital to the whole Christian movement as the consideration of the Church itself, the faith by which it lives, the nature of its witness, the conditions of its life and extension, the relation it must hold to its environment, and the increase of co-operation and unity within it.<sup>92</sup>

Paton agreed that the attention given to the growth of the World churches was reflective of the fact that a truly international Christian community was coming into being: 'Round the concept of the living, growing Church in all the world the whole programme was built. Probably those who compare carefully the findings of this meeting with those of that at Jerusalem will recognize the extent to which on this point there has been a deepening of conviction.'<sup>93</sup> Mott also emphasized the need to incorporate the World churches more fully into discussions and decision making, pointing out that '[the] thinking out of large questions of policy and the adaptation of methods to meet new world conditions cannot be done by the churches and missionary societies in isolation. That day is past.'<sup>94</sup> Mott's hope for Madras was that all present, 'trusted representatives of the older and younger churches of the world, should arrive at a common mind as to God's will concerning the next steps in the realm of attainment and achievement which should be taken by us and our constituencies in the years right before us....'<sup>95</sup>

Another reason for continuing to focus on the building up of the church was the world situation in which the Madras conference took place. Dr. Zoo, a Chinese delegate, said that while the world had hoped that the League of Nations could serve the cause of peace, '[soon], however, because of the ever-mounting clash of national interests and ambitions, this beautiful dream was rudely shattered. One country after another turned its face against this experiment and swung back with a vengeance to nationalistic development.'<sup>96</sup> Zoo contrasted the present world situation with the calling God put on the church, and gave a glimpse as to why partnership, at least in its ecumenical use, should not be viewed simply as an extension of trusteeship: 'That

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<sup>92</sup> *Tamparam Meeting: The World Mission of the Church*, p. 7.

<sup>93</sup> Paton, 'The Meeting of the International Missionary Council at Tamparam, Madras', p. 167.

<sup>94</sup> John R. Mott, 'The Possibilities of the Tamparam Meeting' in *Addresses and Other Records: International Missionary Council Meeting at Tamparam, Madras, December 12<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>, 1938* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 3; hereafter cited as *Tamparam Meeting: Addresses and Other Records*.

<sup>95</sup> Mott, 'The Possibilities of the Tamparam Meeting', p. 4.

<sup>96</sup> T.Z. Zoo, 'The Church and the International Order' in *Tamparam Meeting: Addresses and Other Records*, p. 78.

which is international starts from the fact of division – a world divided into separate states. That which is ecumenical starts from the fact of unity – the unity founded in Christ.’<sup>97</sup> For all those who were looking for hope and unity in a world of desperation and conflict, Zoo felt that the idea of a church, international in its membership and views, could be a beacon: ‘To all who are struggling to realise human brotherhood in a world where disruptive nationalism, brutal militarism and aggressive imperialism make such brotherhood seem unreal, the ecumenical Church offers not only an ideal of brotherhood to be realised at some time in the distant future, but the fact of brotherhood already realised in men united not by their aspirations but by the love of God.’<sup>98</sup>

Finally, focusing on the international church was also important for a third reason. In 1937, meetings were held for both the World Conference on Faith and Order (at Oxford) and the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work (at Edinburgh), the two other branches of the ecumenical movement. At both of these meetings the theme was the church; however, both were studying the topic from the view of ‘chiefly, but not exclusively, the older churches.’<sup>99</sup> Both meetings had raised the prospect of forming a World Council of Churches, and it was hoped that Madras could serve to bring the World churches into the planning and discussions. As Mott noted, ‘[from] every point of view it is desirable that these younger churches should be integrated with this undertaking at the foundation-laying stage.’<sup>100</sup> And according to Paton, unlike previous meetings where the issues concerning the World churches were discussed primarily by Westerners, Madras was to serve not simply to inform the World churches about the growing ecumenical movement, but to incorporate them into it:

[It] would be a total misunderstanding, and a grievous misrepresentation of the fact, if it were thought that the meeting of the Council of Madras was planned as an eastern loud-speaker for the Oxford and Edinburgh radio announcers. That would mean no more was expected than the interpretation of mainly western thinking to the East. What is being planned and prayed for is something quite different, namely, the meeting of many of those who bear the burdens of leadership in the younger Churches and in the missions to study

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<sup>97</sup> Zoo, ‘The Church and the International Order’, p. 76.

<sup>98</sup> Zoo, ‘The Church and the International Order’, p. 77.

<sup>99</sup> *Tamparam Meeting: The World Mission of the Church*, p. 8.

<sup>100</sup> Mott, ‘At Edinburgh, Jerusalem, and Madras’, p. 315.

their own problems and to hear what the Lord God may be pleased to say to them.<sup>101</sup>

The respect and freedom experienced by the delegates from the World churches at Madras was far greater than had been experienced before.

As one can see, the importance of ‘the church’ at the Madras conference was not in dispute, and as at the previous conference in Jerusalem, the growth and maturity of the World churches was recognized. One full volume from the conference, entitled *The Growing Church*, listed churches from around the world and celebrated their achievements. One important aspect of this report is that, for the first time, serious consideration was given to African churches, including the Methodist Church of the Gold Coast, the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa, and the Anglican Union in Uganda. As Utuk notes, although most African churches were still struggling, ‘gradually and steadily, some native churches were coming into the limelight.’<sup>102</sup> At previous conferences, the issue was, however, not the lack of recognition but the fact that, despite this growth, the missionary societies continued with business as usual. What Madras took seriously, for the first time, was the problems involved in bringing the Global and World churches into closer fellowship and partnership when the disparity in size, experience, and especially finances mitigated against any form of equality. While this disparity had been very real throughout the history of Protestant missions, growing nationalism and the world economic depression threw light on this issue as never before. Madras stated officially, for the first time, that the entire missionary enterprise was in need of a new direction: ‘Caught between the economic pressure of reduced support by the sending lands and the growing self-consciousness and self-assertion of the receiving lands, the missionary enterprise is compelled to re-define its aims and to interpret its program in more spiritual and less material terms.’<sup>103</sup>

The emphasis in the above statement, that the program needed to be ‘more spiritual’, came directly from the acknowledgements that at the heart of the disparity between the Global and World churches were issues centered on economics. J. Merle Davis, who had been appointed at Jerusalem to direct the Department of Social and

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<sup>101</sup> Paton, ‘The Madras Meeting and the Oecumenical Movement’, *International Review of Missions* 27 (1938), p. 156.

<sup>102</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 200.

<sup>103</sup> J. Merle Davis, *The Economic and Social Environment of the Younger Churches: Report of the Department of Social and Economic Research of the International Missionary Council to the Tambaram Meeting – December 1938* (London: The Edinburgh House Press, 1939), p. 3.

Economic Research, had spent the years before the Madras conference studying the problems related to the growth of the World churches. His report is direct in its criticism of past (and current) missionary practice:

[On] every mission field there is evidence that economic and social forces have, to an extraordinary degree, determined the direction and controlled the development of the infant Church. These forces, like an atmosphere, are so pervasive and unobtrusive as easily to escape recognition. Economics create an immediate source of misunderstanding in the relationship of the missionary with his people.... He is looked upon as the representative of a wealthy and powerful organisation. On arrival in his field the missionary puts into operation a new standard of economic values. The mission becomes an employer and manager of new material enterprises on a scale hitherto unknown to the community, or associated only with the highest officials and gentry. The missionary's household servants in turn become the support of a circle of relatives; the building operations give employment to scores of artisans; the missionary's table is supplied with the produce of many little farms.... There easily arose a certain sense of power, authority, and superiority from the control of economic and human resources at his command. To the average national the missionary appeared not so much as the exponent of a new religion or way of life as a possible source of personal economic improvement. The mission became a new centre of gravity, disturbing the traditional economic equilibrium of the community.<sup>104</sup>

For Davis, there was 'a perpetual conflict for supremacy between the spiritual and economic forces in the life of the missionary, with the odds in favour of economics winning out and the consequent secularism of the missionary in the community.'<sup>105</sup>

Madras' contribution to the evolution of partnership comes as a result of discussion and decisions centered on solving these issues.

Since those at the Madras conference were able to admit that mistakes had been made in the past, the focus of the discussions was on ways to move forward that would help the World churches become stronger economically. First, it was acknowledged that if the economic situations of the World churches were to improve, the economic climates in which they existed had to change: 'The solving of the economic problems of the Church is bound up with the betterment of the total economic order. We recognise in these problems a direct challenge to the Church and a summons to make experiments in new types of social organisation and in the teaching of its young people to awaken in them a sensitiveness to the tragic disorder of the present world economic system.'<sup>106</sup> However, while the global economy's

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<sup>104</sup> Davis, *The Economic and Social Environment of the Younger Churches*, p. 4.

<sup>105</sup> Davis, *The Economic and Social Environment of the Younger Churches*, p. 9.

<sup>106</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 116.



effect on the churches was recognized, finding concrete solutions to systemic issues was much more problematic. According to Davis, '[new] communities with changed responsibilities and interests, weakened resistances and new economic, social, and moral problems create a difficult situation for the Church, whose programme has been arranged to meet the needs of quite a different environment. It is not surprising that the Church should not immediately grasp the full significance of these swift and tremendous changes in society.'<sup>107</sup> While possibly seeming naïve today, the only suggestion that could be made was to not see the world economic system itself as evil, but to try and take advantage of opportunities present within it:

There is a tendency to deplore the entrance of powerful economic forces into the field of the Church, and the consequent break-up of social customs, sanctions and groupings. We wish to point out that these forces belong to God, are subject to His Will and are His gift to men. We believe that God intends the Church to deal intelligently and purposefully with these economic principles and to build them into His Kingdom.<sup>108</sup>

While Madras addressed issues related to the global economic order, most of the discussion involved the financial relationships between the Global and World churches. Madras recognized that many of the financial problems experienced by the World churches resulted directly from the way in which missionaries had gone about setting up the churches and stations: 'An enterprise, calling for expensive buildings, western-trained leadership and a duplication of much of the equipment, paraphernalia and supplementary activities that characterise the Church in the West, is beyond the supporting power of the average Asiatic community.'<sup>109</sup> Bosch points out that 'the Western church, because of its benevolent paternalism, had created conditions under which the younger churches just could not reach maturity, at least not according to Western church standards.'<sup>110</sup> It was also acknowledged that the grants system that dominated the current relationships between the Global and World churches was a result of the disparity of resources that still existed. And while grants were given with the best intentions, Madras recognized that '[the] evils of this system are now widely

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<sup>107</sup> Davis, *The Economic and Social Environment of the Younger Churches*, p. 22.

<sup>108</sup> Davis, *The Economic and Social Environment of the Younger Churches*, p. 25.

<sup>109</sup> J. Merle Davis, *The Economic Basis of the Church: International Missionary Council Meeting at Tambaram, Madras, December 12<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>, 1938* ((Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 155; hereafter cited as *Tambaram Meeting: The Economic Basis of the Church*.

<sup>110</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 296.

recognised by both younger and older churches and readjustments are being effected [*italics mine*].’<sup>111</sup> Some of the evils recognized were:

- (a) that giving may be vitiated for both giver and receiver by the intrusion of an element of condescension;
- (b) that grants-in-aid sometimes may lead to undue domination or control by the givers;
- (c) that there may be a wrong conception on the part of the recipients who regard outside grants as relieving them of the Christian duty of contributing generously towards the support of their own churches...;
- (d) that grants sometimes have been unwisely allocated and administered.<sup>112</sup>

A number of solutions to these issues were put forward. First, ‘[where] grants-in-aid must still be given, these should be paid out of a central church fund, to which all local churches – self-supporting and aided alike – will contribute. Help from mission or other outside sources should be given through this fund, and it should be administered by a central committee of the church.’<sup>113</sup> Second, a number of practical solutions were put forward as suggestions:

Among the ways in which it has been found possible for the individual or the group to increase in economic strength, and thus in the power to support their own churches, we note the following:

- (a) co-operatives and Christian guilds;
- (b) the Lord’s acre plan by which the proceeds of a part of one’s property – land, trees, or livestock – is dedicated to the Lord;
- (c) church farms where members contribute in labour;
- (d) small home industries from the proceeds of which church gifts are made;
- (e) the rural community parish in which a church identifies itself with many aspects of the economic and social as well as the spiritual life of its community;
- (f) the every member canvas;
- (g) the Christian tithe;
- (h) the adaptation and use by the church of indigenous ways of giving.<sup>114</sup>

In addition to the above mentioned changes, Davis also believed that a fundamental change needed to take place in the work of missionaries. According to Hogg, ‘the missionary movement had been conceived three dimensionally – in terms of evangelistic, educational, and medical enterprises.’<sup>115</sup> At Jerusalem, these three had been referred to as the ‘comprehensive’ approach. Due to the financial inequalities between churches, Davis felt that a fourth dimension was necessary;

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<sup>111</sup> *Tamparam Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 120. It is important to note that the system of grants is described as ‘evil’. Madras was much more forthright in its judgments than previous conferences.

<sup>112</sup> *Tamparam Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, pp. 120-121.

<sup>113</sup> *Tamparam Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 121.

<sup>114</sup> *Tamparam Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, pp. 121-122.

<sup>115</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 299.

‘namely, that of the economic and social environment, and that it should learn to deal with this as energetically and effectively as it does with evangelism, education, and medical work.’<sup>116</sup> Just as Jerusalem was a significant step forward from Edinburgh, the changed world situation necessitated that, on these issues, Madras would be a significant step forward from Jerusalem. The admission of failure in the past as well as suggestions on how to change relationships in the future showed the readjustments that delegates were willing to make. Unfortunately, as will be discussed, World War II and the consequent push for Western style *development* would mitigate against meaningful change. As Utuk argues, the readjustments suggested at Madras were ‘not widespread or significant enough to generate radical changes prior to the 1960s.’<sup>117</sup>

While the call for attention to be paid to the economic and social conditions of the World churches was new, on many other issues Madras repeated and reinforced Jerusalem’s mandates. One of these issues was the need for the World churches to be indigenous while at the same time remaining connected to the larger, ecumenical church. Delegates at Madras recognized the rights of individuals and churches to search for expressions of Christianity that would speak to them and their culture, even if some Westerners expressed reservations: ‘[To-day] African, Chinese, Indian, Japanese and other indigenous expressions of the Christian religion are taking shape. There may indeed be forms which do not truly represent the Gospel. Nevertheless, it is not in principle wrong or illegitimate that there should be, as interpretations of the one Gospel, many forms of Christianity.’<sup>118</sup> For Madras, as Jerusalem, the corrective to any wayward expressions of Christianity were the ties connecting individual churches and communities to the larger ecumenical Church, as can be seen in the very definition which Madras gives to the term ‘indigenous’:

An indigenous church, young or old, in the East or in the West, is a church which, rooted in obedience to Christ, spontaneously uses forms of thought and modes of action natural and familiar in its own environment. Such a church arises in response to Christ’s own call. The younger churches will not be unmindful of the experiences and teachings which the older churches have recorded in their confessions and liturgies. But every younger church will seek further to bear witness to the same Gospel with new tongues also; that is, in a direct, clear and close relationship with the cultural and religious heritage of its own culture.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 123.

<sup>117</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 201.

<sup>118</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 30.

<sup>119</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 31.

Second, Madras also repeated Jerusalem's findings concerning the continued need for foreign missionaries to work with the World churches. In a statement reflecting the view of the delegates from the these churches, it was noted that '[the] younger churches, exposed to the disintegrating influences of contemporary life and confronting unprecedented opportunities, urgently call for the reinforcement of an increased number of missionaries from overseas.'<sup>120</sup> Calls were repeated for missionaries willing to 'be a colleague and friendly helper in the upbuilding of the life of the younger churches.'<sup>121</sup> As many of the World churches were quite advanced in their administrative abilities, it was agreed that the 'present stage of co-operative undertakings call for a policy of closer co-operation between sending and receiving churches in the selection of missionaries. Suitable candidates must be sought out, not simply accepted.'<sup>122</sup> Finally, it was agreed that the World churches' involvement with the recruitment and oversight of missionaries also necessitated that they take some responsibility for the work and ministry of the missionaries that served them:

[It] is ... essential that the younger churches should assume a large measure of responsibility for assisting the missionary to become the best possible servant.... The younger churches should exercise care and wisdom in assigning to each missionary the work that will allow him to make his largest contribution to the church. Unless the younger churches treat missionaries as they wish missionaries to treat them, recruits may not be forthcoming.<sup>123</sup>

Thirdly, in the relationships between the Global and World churches it was suggested that there should be 'as little emphasis as possible upon financial relationships.... The receiving of financial aid from the older churches should not constitute a barrier to the fullest possible development of the younger churches along indigenous lines.'<sup>124</sup> It was also stressed that, while missionaries continued to supply educational and training support for the leaders of the younger churches, the most important aspect was that 'missionaries be men and women who come with Christ-like love, sympathy, and understanding, ready for a relationship of partnership and equality, eager to welcome the initiative and leadership of the younger churches.'<sup>125</sup>

Lastly, it was suggested that visits of missionaries from the World churches to the churches of Global Christianity, termed Missions of Fellowship, be 'recognised as

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<sup>120</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 98.

<sup>121</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 98.

<sup>122</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 100.

<sup>123</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 101.

<sup>124</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 171.

<sup>125</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 171.

of importance to meet mutual needs, binding us together in the body of Christ and stimulating a feeling of partnership together in a common task.<sup>126</sup> Principles to follow in Mission of Fellowship exchanges were also suggested. These included:

- (a) They should go as ambassadors of Jesus Christ, never as ‘specimens.’
- (b) They should go to share their experiences of Christ without ulterior motive.
- (c) The members should be worthy representatives intellectually and spiritually of the church which they represent.
- (d) At least some share of the expense involved should be borne by the younger church to make it genuinely a ‘Mission’ ....<sup>127</sup>

Above all, and in keeping with the overall theme of the conference, it was put forward that in all the dealings between the churches of Global and World Christianity the ‘ideal of the universal Church must be kept before us.’<sup>128</sup>

Before closing this section, it is important to note two contributions of Madras not seen at previous conferences. First, responding to the many ongoing crises of the time, a number of strong stands on social justice issues were taken. In looking at the conflicts raging around the world and their causes, Madras stated that

in practice between nations the love of neighbor means doing justice.... No nation may deliberately pursue its own interests at the expense of its neighbors. Injustice drives nations to desperate courses, including war. More equitable access to natural resources and markets, a fairer distribution of wealth within the nations and economic co-operation on the international scale are essential.<sup>129</sup>

Madras also spoke against imperialism and called for an end to colonization: ‘Justice requires the elimination of the domination of one people by another.... Where government of one people by another exists, its goal should be that the people so governed comes freely to order and control its own life.’<sup>130</sup> In addition, the IMC, for the first time at a conference such as this, recognized the existence of systemic injustice and called on churches to take stands for justice, even if it put them at odds with the powers in their own countries: ‘There is such a thing as an evil soul, but there is also such a thing as an evil system. Shall we rescue the wounded in war and not strike at the war system?’<sup>131</sup> While some delegates were not happy that Madras did not address specific issues, such as German aggression in Europe or colonial labor

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<sup>126</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 172.

<sup>127</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 172.

<sup>128</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 170.

<sup>129</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 137.

<sup>130</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 137.

<sup>131</sup> *Tambaram Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 126.

policies in Africa, Utuk writes that at least these pronouncements ‘signalled the beginning of the end for the largely cozy relationship which existed between the missionary community and the Colonial Powers....’<sup>132</sup>

Second, the call for church unity, especially from the World churches, was quite strong at Madras. The World churches put forth a statement, saying that although the divisions of the church were planted by missionaries, ‘[we] confess with shame that we ourselves have often been the cause of thus bringing dishonour to the religion of our Master. The representatives of the younger churches ... all gave expression to the passionate longing that exists in all countries for visible union of the churches.’<sup>133</sup> After stating this passion, the representatives of the World churches pleaded with those from Global churches not to be a hindrance to their efforts at union:

Union proposals have been put forward in different parts of the world. Loyalty however will forbid the younger churches going forward to consummate any union unless it receives the whole-hearted support and blessing of those through whom these churches have been planted. We are thus often torn between loyalty to our mother churches and loyalty to our idea of union. We, therefore, appeal with all the fervour we possess, to the missionary societies and boards and the responsible authorities of the older churches, to take this matter seriously to heart, to labour with the churches in the mission field to achieve this union, to support and encourage us in all our efforts to put an end to the scandalous effects of our divisions, and to lead us in the path of union....<sup>134</sup>

This witness and desire showed not only the spiritual maturity that many from the World churches had reached, but also their confidence to challenge the churches of Global Christianity to actually follow their lead, or at least get out of the way. As Hogg notes, ‘[never] before had so stirring an appeal been rung out by the younger churches.’<sup>135</sup>

According to Hogg, ‘[the] real significance of Madras lay in what it *was* rather than what it *did*. It was a unifying event in the life of the whole church – an event which revealed to the churches the fellowship of the church universal.’<sup>136</sup> This revelation was especially significant for the representatives from the World churches, for not only did their delegates attend meetings and discussions with delegates from

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<sup>132</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 204.

<sup>133</sup> *Tamparam Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 155.

<sup>134</sup> *Tamparam Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 155.

<sup>135</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 302.

<sup>136</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 301.

the Global churches, but due to their large numbers they were able to share and learn from each other. As Mott notes,

[the] contacts established, the fellowship experienced and the means of wider communication opened up should introduce on a far wider scale the process of cross-fertilization among the younger churches. For example, between the churches of India and those of other Asiatic countries and the Netherlands Indies, or between those of different parts of Africa. This suggests fascinating possibilities....<sup>137</sup>

The members of the World churches were also afforded opportunities to set up exhibits to share their cultures, as well as how their churches were engaging in ministry in their own settings. The official records of the Madras conference note that the life and vitality of the World churches was 'vividly suggested by two exhibits, one of Christian literature and the other of Christian art and architecture, which were open to delegates throughout the conference. Beyond their immediate and most important purpose, these exhibits made it possible to visualise much of the detailed services undertaken by the churches, and their living relation to the different national heritages within which they were set.'<sup>138</sup>

Madras also helped to bring the World churches more fully into ecumenical dialogue, especially with the Faith and Order and Life and Work movements. Although the realization of a World Council of Churches was still a decade away, Madras could 'look forward with confidence to the part which the younger churches [would] play in the future work of the Council.'<sup>139</sup> When summing up the Madras conference's significance for the ecumenical movement, and specifically the World churches, the church historian K.S. Latourette wrote that '[increasingly] and rapidly ... the non-occidental Churches are entering on the basis of full equality into the world-wide Christian fellowship. Christianity is becoming in achievement, as it has long been in principle, universal.'<sup>140</sup>

At the conclusion of Madras, as at Jerusalem, much effort was put into taking the message of the conference back to the *home base*. According to Hogg, the 'follow-up continued until the outbreak of war. Most notable among the attempts to convey Madras to the Western church constituencies were the Fellowship Teams

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<sup>137</sup> Mott, 'At Edinburgh, Jerusalem, and Madras', p. 315.

<sup>138</sup> *Tamparam Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 13.

<sup>139</sup> *Tamparam Meeting: The World Message of the Church*, p. 153.

<sup>140</sup> K.S. Latourette, 'The Vitality of the Younger Churches: A Question and a Possible Answer', *International Review of Mission* 28 (1939), p. 490.

made up of men and women from the younger churches. During the winter of 1939 one team crossed the United States and another travelled throughout Britain.<sup>141</sup> The findings of the conference were also translated into Arabic, Afrikaans, Chinese, Danish, French, and Spanish. Understanding that during this time many within the *home base* were preoccupied with war and financial depression, these efforts seem to have had little effect on the basic assumptions and understanding of mission by the average church member.

## 6.6 The Younger Churches and World War II

As delegates left India, the prospects of another world war were very real. Remembering the strained relationships between Anglo-American and Continental missions during the first world war, in 1939 Mott and Warnshuis traveled to Berlin to consult with leaders there. Agreement was reached on a plan, involving four basic principles, in case war became a reality:

[Channels] of communication would be kept as open as possible; National Christian Councils would care in every possible way for the younger churches whose missionaries might be interned; financial help would be given to missionaries cut off from their home base but not interned; finally, the attempt would be made to protect mission property as it had been under the Versailles Treaty. The missionary community, praying and working for peace, had prepared for possible disruption by war.<sup>142</sup>

Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. Two years later, the United States entered the war after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. War engulfed the entire globe; every continent was affected. In Asia, Africa, and the Pacific Islands, missionaries were interned leaving behind 'orphaned missions'; others, allowed to stay, were cut off from all funding and were termed 'orphaned missionaries'. The plans put in place in Berlin, however, worked to keep the young and struggling ecumenical movement together. Monies were collected and channeled by the IMC to keep the affected missionaries and churches going, even if programs had to be drastically scaled back. As Hogg notes, '[the] Orphaned Missions Fund operated on an income of less than \$800,000 a year during the war.... For hundreds of

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<sup>141</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 303.

<sup>142</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 304. Hogg notes that this effort at cooperation was much more successful than those which took place during World War I. At the conclusion of the war, 'there was understanding, a grateful renewal of acquaintance, and a determination to begin building together again in love and mutual trust.... There was no German reluctance as at Crans in 1920.' Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 318.



stranded missionaries it kept body and soul together. For members of the younger churches it maintained necessary institutions ... and it bore constant testimony to the fellowship of which they are a part.<sup>143</sup>

When looking at the funding program put in place during the war, one of the unexpected outcomes was the space that it allowed for the World churches to show their growth and maturity. When Mott, Warnshuis, and German church leaders met in 1939 to make plans, it was assumed that the vast majority of the funding for this effort would come from the Global churches. However, in many instances it was the World churches which were contributing assistance. Phillips, writing in *IRM*, gave details concerning these efforts:

A few outcaste Christians from Hyderabad have gone to Bombay for the sake of a better livelihood. Hearing there of the air-raids they clubbed together and sent fifty rupees ... to help their fellow Christians in Britain. A Methodist Sunday School in Colombo had a nativity play, and brought gifts which it laid reverently on the manger. They were to be used for the bombed churches in England.... From small and lonely islands in the Pacific, and from Central Africa, large sums (over £600 through the London Missionary Society alone) have been given to the Red Cross.<sup>144</sup>

Not only did the World churches contribute financially to assist their sisters and brothers in the Global churches, but they sought ways to support one another as well: '[The] times have quickened in the Younger Churches a new sense of the need to help churches like themselves in other lands.... The Baptist Missionary Society has instances of African Christians sending funds for the relief of their brethren in China suffering because of the war, though to the African China seems almost in another world.'<sup>145</sup> For Phillips, these were signs of God creating good out of evil, for '[when] peoples far separated by geography and race in a time of common suffering feel for each other "in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ", we see the beginning of that universal Church, the Body of Christ, for which the Christian mission labours and prays.'<sup>146</sup> The dreams of 'church-centric' missions, so strongly mandated at both Jerusalem and Madras, were slowly becoming reality.

That said, it was still recognized that not all World churches were maturing at the same rate. Previous conferences, while considered international in scope, focused

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<sup>143</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 316.

<sup>144</sup> Godfrey E. Phillips, 'The Younger Churches Help the Older', *International Review of Missions* 30 (1941), p. 541.

<sup>145</sup> Phillips, 'The Younger Churches Help the Older', p. 541.

<sup>146</sup> Phillips, 'The Younger Churches Help the Older', p. 545.

mainly on the achievements of the Asian churches. The Foreign Missions Conference of North America acknowledged that the very real need existed for a thorough study of the church in Africa, and it is to this conference that we now turn.

#### 6.7 The Church Conference on African Affairs – Westerville (1942)

In the midst of World War II, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America sponsored a 'Church Conference on African Affairs' at Westerville, Ohio, in 1942.<sup>147</sup> The conference brought together 199 delegates from 52 organizations; however, the vast majority were not from Africa. As the report from the conference states, it 'regretted that under wartime conditions it was impossible to have a larger representation from Africa and Europe to add to the total...'<sup>148</sup> The conference did have 29 black American representatives. In addition, four Africans were in attendance.<sup>149</sup>

The conference saw Africa in a time of turmoil and transition for which it was not ready:

Africa – itself in radical and brusque internal change and still in rather primary relationships with outside races, politics, economics, religion and culture – is now caught up in the world revolution that is [ongoing] on every continent and early every island of the world.... But the Africans are facing not only those stresses and strains which are presently common to others. They are in addition, within their own inner lives, grappling with changes which other peoples have taken a thousand years or more to accomplish.<sup>150</sup>

The conference also recognized that the majority of Africa was under colonial rule, and that this fact had significant consequences on how Africa, as well as the rest of the world, interpreted these changes. The report listed two ways in which colonialism was directly affecting Africa's place in this new, revolutionary world. First, colonial governments controlled the political, economic, and social lives of their subjects; thus, despite calls for more autonomy and power to be in the hands of nationals, African lives and labor were still being used by and for the benefit of Europeans. Second,

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<sup>147</sup> Since this conference was not sponsored by the IMC, but one of its constituent members, Westerville does not fall directly in the line Edinburgh, Jerusalem, and Madras. However, the conference was important because its discussions and findings shed light onto how Africa and partnership were perceived at this time.

<sup>148</sup> *Christian Action in Africa: Report of the Church Conference on African Affairs Held at Otterbein College, Westerville, Ohio, June 19-25, 1942* (New York: Africa Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, 1942), p. 1; hereafter cited as *Christian Action in Africa*.

<sup>149</sup> These four were James T. Ayorinde from Nigeria, Adjei Ako from the Gold Coast, Joseph N. Togba from Liberia, and Mrs. Ntombikobani Tantsi from South Africa.

<sup>150</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 7.

the outer-world relationship changes which Africans are required now to make are being transmitted to them at second or third hand and their resources to the outer world are for the most part equally indirect. Effective touch with the rest of the world is confined largely to this alien layer which lies over Africa. It is something like a tough, opaque fabric enveloping Africa through which the blows and pressures of the world can be sharply felt in Africa and Africa's resultant movement can be faintly detected in the world, but through which neither Africa nor the world can clearly and understandingly see the other.<sup>151</sup>

Given this context in which to work, Westerville set out to better understand Africa, what ways to best assist the African churches' growth and maturity, and the African churches' relationship to the greater ecumenical movement.

Westerville first set out to study the state of the church in Africa. What was presented was a mixture of successes and failures: 'Here and there it is strong; elsewhere it is weak; in some places it doesn't exist at all; in some places it has existed but has declined....'<sup>152</sup> The conference also looked at the formation of national Christian councils in Africa, and here again the results were mixed. One success story was the Congo Protestant Council, 'which is the best integrated, widest spread and most largely supported of the African Christian councils.'<sup>153</sup> Other councils were in various states of growth or decline:

In Gambia, there is no coöperative movement. Two British missions are at work. In Sierra Leone the United Christian Council was organized in 1924. It has elements of vigor but would be strengthened by having a full-time secretary and much additional support in every way. In Liberia there is good spirit but no inter-mission organization at all.... The Gold Coast Christian Council has an African as one of its secretaries. It is fairly well supported, but needs wider development. In French West Africa, nothing has been done.<sup>154</sup>

Given the slow growth of national Christian councils, Westerville did recommend that 'appropriate steps should be taken to bring about African representation on the Christian Councils in the various areas. We consider that the time is ripe for such action.'<sup>155</sup>

Another aspect of the church studied at Westerville, and directly tied to the above discussion, was the success or failure of indigenization, and the missionary's

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<sup>151</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 7.

<sup>152</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 17.

<sup>153</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 20.

<sup>154</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 19.

<sup>155</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 167.

role in this process.<sup>156</sup> First, delegates stated clearly that ‘[we] desire at the outset to disclaim in the most emphatic manner any intention of formulating a scheme that shall be imposed upon Africans by external authority.... African Christians themselves, guided by the Spirit of God, will ultimately decide what external form their Christianity will take.’<sup>157</sup> However, while expressing the intention of allowing Africans to make decisions regarding the direction of their churches, the report was quick to note that missionaries were still necessary, and not simply as partners: ‘[The] missionary has a part to play in moulding the Christian Church in Africa. The day is, in most parts of Africa, still distant when his instruction, direction, counsel, will no longer be required. Perhaps he may help the African to understand himself and the values in his heritage.... [We] wish ... to coöperate [sic] with the African in that process.’<sup>158</sup> To bolster the argument that missionaries were needed to help lead and direct the church, the report pointed to the condition of education on the continent. It was stated that, although much had been done, ‘the whole task of Christian education in Africa is vastly greater than the measure of present achievement.’<sup>159</sup> In the recorded discussions, N.S. Booth said that ‘[the] Africa for which we are striving – one in the brotherhood of continents – is an educated Africa, and that Africa on the whole does not yet exist.’<sup>160</sup> When one reads the discussions concerning indigenization and the state of the church, it becomes clear that despite the desire that the process be led by Africans, many from the Global churches simply wanted African ‘cooperation’ as churches were developed, using European and American lines of development as the benchmark for success. In Africa at least, the idea of trusteeship was still very much alive.

Fortunately, the report also gave a place to voices of dissent, both Western and African. E.W. Smith said that he looked forward to the day when the ‘African churches are organized on African, and not American or European patterns; that our educational methods are grafted upon African methods and conserve African values;

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<sup>156</sup> It is important to note Madras’ definition for what constituted an ‘indigenous church’ was also used at Westerville. That is, an indigenous church is one that, in addition to being connected with the ecumenical movement, also ‘spontaneously uses forms of thought and modes of action which are natural and familiar in its own environment. It will bear witness to the Gospel in a direct, clear and close relationship with the cultural and religious heritage of its own country.’ *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 24.

<sup>157</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 24.

<sup>158</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 24. Notice the desire is for cooperation, not partnership. Despite pronouncements at Jerusalem and Madras, the word ‘partnership’ is not used once in this report.

<sup>159</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 74.

<sup>160</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 74.

that Africans are allowed to express themselves in worship and creed in African ways rather than in American and European....'<sup>161</sup> He also reminded those from the Global churches that '[we] missionaries, after all, are only a temporary evanescent feature in the African scene. It is the African Church that will ultimately rule and decide its own destiny. We have to look forward to that.'<sup>162</sup> Warnshuis, who had previously studied the growth of partnership in Asia, reflected that the problem was not with Africans, but with the type of training being given by missionaries:

I wish we could learn for Africa the lesson we have been taught in other lands. We have the same difficulty in China. I remember in a meeting like this thirty years ago C.T. Wang said, 'You missionaries are great in training followers.' This is just what we do. We do not train leaders, for there is no room for them. We are the leaders. We just do not train leaders – we just train followers. That is true in the matter of the transferring responsibility and leadership.... Let the leadership develop by our laying responsibility on them, by trusting them, by throwing them in and letting them swim back or sink and die.<sup>163</sup>

Mr. Ayorinde, an African student from Nigeria, agreed when he stated that the African church 'must be built for Africans and by the Africans, with the missionary in the background.... I think the time is now ripe for us to be trained to carry these responsibilities on our own shoulders.'<sup>164</sup> Warnshuis also noted that, in a very real way, the war was beneficial for the African churches because, with the withdrawal of missionaries and the decline in grants-in-aid, the emerging African churches were having, by necessity, to stand on their own. Warnshuis also, however, issued a word of caution. His fear was that once the war was over, returning missionaries would not accept the new situation: 'I sometimes think it is a providential thing that the war is keeping some of us people here in America. ...My fear is that when some of us go back we won't realize and understand what has happened, and we will try to take back again the places that we ought never to have had.'<sup>165</sup> In his study of the Protestant missions and Africa, Utuk agrees that Warnshuis's fear was

not unfounded because, willy-nilly, someone's livelihood was tied to those positions. For, contrary to popular thought, the enterprise was not only beneficial to Africans. It was also extremely beneficial to metropolitan countries and individual missionaries.... Thus, if one truly wants to know

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<sup>161</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 67.

<sup>162</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 73.

<sup>163</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, pp. 71-72.

<sup>164</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 72.

<sup>165</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 72.

why there was too much foot dragging on the devolution question, this factor of vested interest must be taken into consideration.<sup>166</sup>

Given the world crises of war and financial depression, Westerville did try to address issues regarding Africa's commercial and political relationships with the colonial powers. In these efforts the official resolutions of the conference are quite shortsighted. First, Westerville acknowledged that racism existed and that it permeated every relationship between Euro/Americans and Africans. A call was made to end racism in every form; it was not realized, however, that the suggestion offered would only lead to more racism: '[It] is a matter of vital importance that all forms of racial discrimination should be eliminated, and that instead of looking upon different races as "superior" or "inferior," they should rather be considered as "advanced" or "retarded."' <sup>167</sup> According to Utuk, '[clearly] here Westerville's imagination was not particularly "advanced", for, by speaking of retardation, it failed to recognize that it was replacing one stereotype with another.' <sup>168</sup> Second, Westerville sought to speak a word to the colonial governments concerning their exploits in Africa. Delegates believed that the nature of the relationship between colonizer and colonized should change; thus they offered this resolution: 'That the word "guardianship" is better than "trusteeship" as applied to African colonial territory as it rightly implies that the relationship is not permanent but has as its purpose the fitting of the ward for self-government as soon as his education and experience permit.' <sup>169</sup> All other resolutions passed concerning colonial relationships were simply reminders to the European powers of their 'sacred trust' to develop

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<sup>166</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 215.

<sup>167</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 170.

<sup>168</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 216.

<sup>169</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 171. During this time, the ecumenical movement continued to struggle with the issue of colonization. While many resolutions here, as well as in past conferences, dealt with specific aspects of the colonial system, such as land rights or labor policies, on the whole there was little questioning of the system itself. What was hoped for was that the system could be *humanized* so that both colonized and colonizers would benefit. For example, F.M. van Asbeck wrote in 1940 that '[the] colonial task stands with such magnitude before our own and coming generations, and the responsibility is so heavy, that all means ought to be tried which might be helpful towards removing national monopolist tendencies and international appetites, both oppressive heritages of the past. By so doing the way might be at the same time paved towards that *partnership* between western and native peoples – here soon, there later – will surely, along with the growth of national consciousness among the native peoples, take the place of the old conceptions of empire and trusteeship.' F.M. van Asbeck, 'Our Colonial Problem and Task', *International Review of Missions* 29 (1940), p. 328. Even in its reformist manifestations, *humanitarian* concerns still did not question the colonial system itself, only its effects.

others. Westerville, in spite of many beneficial findings, ‘failed to see that the era of decolonization was about to begin.’<sup>170</sup>

For the study of partnership, Westerville is beneficial for a number of reasons. First, since most world gatherings tended to give more space for delegates and discussion to the churches in Asia, Westerville helps one to get a sense of the African churches and their growth. Second, Westerville called for indigenization along the lines expressed at Madras, even if the end of the process was seen as lying in the far distant future. Lastly, the conference gave space for both Americans and Africans to express criticisms of the current state of affairs in the African churches and to offer suggestions for change. In some ways, delegates at Westerville were shortsighted. They talked of cooperation and not partnership, and while other colonized peoples would soon be experiencing freedom, delegates at Westerville could only see Africa under the ‘guardianship’ of the West for years to come. Despite these failings, Westerville is important because, for the first time, the ecumenical movement ‘strove to take Africa seriously.’<sup>171</sup>

## 6.8 Taking Stock in a Post-War World

With Germany’s surrender on May 7, followed soon after by Japan’s on August 17, the Second World War ended in 1945. Even before the war ended, however, ecumenical leaders were seeking direction for the growing international church in a post-war world. Writing in 1944, J. Merle Davis believed that adjusting to the new political world emerging at the end of the war constituted an enormous challenge to the church:

The political destinies of India, China, and Japan – not to mention the smaller nations and the colonial peoples – are awaiting the unpredictable outcome of world issues. The outcome of such issues as the effect upon Asiatics of Russia’s astonishing and meteoric success, the struggle of India for freedom, and the dispensation of the pre-war European colonies in Asia, Africa, and the islands of the Pacific, will be of profound concern to Christian missions.<sup>172</sup>

Davis also insisted that the ecclesiastical world would have to change as well. Specifically, the growth and maturity of the World churches, expressed through the

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<sup>170</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 219.

<sup>171</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 218.

<sup>172</sup> J. Merle Davis, *The Preparation of Missionaries for Work in the Post-War Era* (New York: Department of Social and Economic Research and Counsel, International Missionary Council, 1944), p. 10.

offering of both prayer and finances, was something to which missionaries from Global Christianity would need to adjust:

There is the elusive factor of the new native initiatives, leadership, self-expression, and self-help which the war has developed on many mission fields. Unexpected capacities for leadership have been revealed, individuals and churches have risen to surprising heights of self-sacrifice and achievement; they have discovered hidden powers in themselves.... The missionary will face unprecedented situations; he must learn to breathe in a new atmosphere....<sup>173</sup>

Davis felt that the immediate post-war time was one of either great opportunity or great peril, and that the international church must make careful and deliberate decisions on how to move forward so as not to repeat the mistakes of the past. For instance, he felt that it was important

not to rebuild the disorganized Christian movement upon the old patterns.... [The] war will have provided the opportunity to build anew from the ground up, not only in brick and mortar, but in policies, location, organization, and leadership and in the sources of the support of the movement. The issues will be complicated by the expectation on the part of the sending as well as the younger churches that large sums of western money must be used to put the native church as quickly as possible again upon its feet. The peril of destroying much of the new national initiative and hard-gained ground toward self-support will be matched by the danger of declining the initial help that may be needed by the church for securing a new foothold on the path toward independence.<sup>174</sup>

As a result of these challenges, the IMC devised a strategy for dealing with the immediate aftermath of war. The first priority was to reestablish connections between its constituent churches and missions around the world. One way in which this was facilitated was a four day meeting, in February 1946, of the *Ad Interim* Committee of the IMC in Geneva, Switzerland. According to Hogg, Geneva served as the ‘renewal of contact after the war. It provided opportunity for all to survey the Council’s war-time work and progress and to enable the National Christian Councils isolated by war to report on what had happened to them.’<sup>175</sup> Secondly, the Council agreed that the work for the orphaned missions must continue. While it was assumed that in a few countries missionary work could resume quickly, it was understood that ‘in most cases serious difficulties must be anticipated and surmounted. Some “sending” countries will have been ravaged ... by war.... The giving constituencies may be

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<sup>173</sup> Davis, *The Preparation of Missionaries for Work in the Post-War Era*, p. 11.

<sup>174</sup> Davis, *The Preparation of Missionaries for Work in the Post-War Era*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>175</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 329.



disorganized or dispersed, and the same may be true of missionary staff. Missionaries still on the field must be brought home immediately for recuperation and rehabilitation.’<sup>176</sup> To guard against the Global mission boards and missionaries simply assuming that they could continue their previous programs unchanged, they were warned that the ‘Younger Churches concerned will have come into a new sense of proprietorship and responsibility and must be fully consulted with regard to the longer-term arrangements for their benefit.’<sup>177</sup> Lastly, it was believed that, given the enormous changes in the world situation, the IMC must rethink and redefine its aims and methods to adequately minister and serve in the post-war world. The IMC believed that there ‘must be revolutionary changes in strategy, if the challenges of the period are to be met and the Christian message proclaimed throughout a shaken and suffering world.’<sup>178</sup>

#### 6.9 The End of the Crisis?

As delegates left Jerusalem in 1928, they were, unbeknown to them, entering a time of crisis the likes of which they had never seen. The financial depression, the rise of nationalism and totalitarian governments, and a second world war all greatly affected international mission, as well as any efforts to put Jerusalem’s mandates for partnership and mutuality into action. But as the war ended, and the post-war world started coming into view, one could rightly ask if the time of crisis had really passed? The ecumenical movement would continue to build on both Jerusalem’s and Madras’ understandings of partnership, but as the dust began to settle after the World War II, it was evident that the political, economic, and social landscape had changed drastically. Just as the Protestant missionary movement was in need of new and revolutionary changes in strategy, the partnership debate would now be framed in a new and revolutionary world.

#### 6.10 Tracing the Four Themes

From the discussions above, it is evident that this time of crisis, including a worldwide financial depression, the rise of totalitarian regimes, increased nationalism in many countries of the South, and ultimately a second world war, led to significant

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<sup>176</sup> *The Post War Programme of the International Missionary Council* (London: International Missionary Council, 1944), p. 5.

<sup>177</sup> *The Post War Programme of the International Missionary Council*, p. 5.

<sup>178</sup> *The Post War Programme of the International Missionary Council*, p. 6.

changes in how peoples from the North and South related to one another. These events understandably influenced the relationships between Global and World Christians, with all four themes that we are tracing being prominent in the narrative.

In the early 1930's, Mott noted the decline in mission support among the *home base*. While the financial depression must be factored into this, Mott believed that a decrease in lay participation in mission was also to blame. Throughout this period, Global church leaders continued to believe that education was central in not only changing their constituencies' commitment to support mission financially, but also their attitude regarding the changing nature of international mission. Recalling the education efforts made after the Jerusalem conference, following Madras 'Fellowship Teams', including members from the World churches, held meetings to share the conference's findings with the churches of Global Christianity. Despite these efforts, since it was church leaders who had relationships with one another, the *home base* was distant from these realities. Few within Global Christianity realized that mission as expansion was slowly giving way to efforts at shared ministry and partnership.

As mentioned at the end of the last chapter, Global church efforts at *humanitarianism* and *development* only grew after the Jerusalem IMC meeting in 1928. Decisions made there led to two different programs of study, as J. Merle Davis became the director of the Department of Social and Industrial Research and Kenyon Butterfield conducted studies in Asia on rural communities. Both of these efforts were seen as vital to delegates at Madras, who believed that the financial concerns of World churches could not improve until the economic environment in which they existed did as well. Thus, they added concerns around social and economic problems to Jerusalem's call for 'comprehensive mission'. Interestingly, a number of delegates at Madras noted that Global/World partnerships could be more equitable if they focused on spiritual sharing; however, the vast majority of discussion continued to be centered on financial issues. Although given the circumstances one can understand why that was the case, the concentration of partnership efforts on economic and *humanitarian* issues meant that coming meetings would continue to focus on material disparities and not relationships of spiritual sharing.

The rise in growth and self-confidence of many World churches, as well as their increased participation in international mission meetings, meant that issues of *authority* continued to be addressed. During this period, it seems that in general Global church leaders took Azariah's call for 'friends' seriously. It was agreed that,

in this new environment, missionaries should be helpers and servants and not placed in positions of control and power. The study entitled *Partners in the Expanding Church* echoed Fleming's call that devolution should be authentic and not merely nominal. Some even felt that the time was soon coming when the World churches would call and supervise the missionaries, as well as control the funds, which they received. Not all Global church leaders, however, supported these changes. And while there was no unanimity on these issues, all Global church leaders acknowledged that though they may apply to the churches in Asia; the state of World churches in Africa necessitated missionaries who were *leaders*, not *servants*.

Finally, although there was much *rhetoric* giving voice to the need for partnership, most Global churches could not get over their feelings of superiority, especially in regards to Africa. While Madras called for all churches to work together to redefine the aims of ecumenical mission, focusing more on spiritual than material means, the reality was that few relationships actually changed.

## Chapter 7

### Partnership in a Time of Revolution

The crisis years of depression and war ushered in an era of revolutionary changes, in both the ecclesiological and secular worlds, and served to alter the parameters of the partnership debate forever. Although the financial collapse and war devastated many in the global South, these crises did serve the purpose of strengthening the World churches. With overseas funding cut off, or at best drastically reduced, and with the recall of many missionaries during the war, the World churches had been forced to depend, to a large extent, on their own leadership and resources. After the end of the war they would not easily return to the pre-war relationships that had existed. Many in the Global churches also recognized these changes and wanted to find a balance between assisting churches and peoples with post-war recovery while not slipping back into relationships that created dependency. And while the churches struggled with these issues, they did so in a postwar world that proved to be one of revolutions, especially in the areas of politics and development.

When continuing to trace the four themes, due to the revolutions mentioned above, the issues of the *home base*, *humanitarianism/development* and *authority* will be quite prominent during this period. And while the issue of *rhetoric* and *reality* is present, it will not be as significant; for while many calls for changed relationships were made during this time, it will not be realized until later just how difficult partnership will be to live out.

#### 7.1 The Revolution of Decolonization and Independence

At the end of World War II, there seemed to be some hope among the colonial powers that a return to the pre-war *status quo* could be anticipated. As Blainey states, '[the] map of the world, redrawn so extensively by the First World War, was not redrawn dramatically by the Second World War. Nearly all the European-owned colonies of 1939 were still colonies in 1945.'<sup>1</sup> During the war, the British government passed the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of July 1940, which stated that the government should continue to work for the development and improvement of life in the colonies, but did not mention devolution or independence

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<sup>1</sup> Blainey, *A Brief History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p. 177.

for colonized peoples. The idea was to maintain their colonies and the concept of trusteeship for the foreseeable future, but to adjust their policies to a new post-war world in which, understandably, calls for independence and statehood would continue to grow. It is in the context of these colonial debates that William Bain asserts that the term 'partnership' gained widespread currency in describing North/South relationships:

The emergence of a refined and elaborated idea of trusteeship called 'partnership' substantially redefined relations within the British Empire. Partnership took as its defining cue [the] belief that there was no reason why colonial development should not proceed as it did in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. In time, other colonies would grow-up like the 'white dominions' to be self-governing nations, equal in political status to Britain, that were fully responsible for their own affairs.<sup>2</sup>

Bain goes on to explain that '[partnership] expressed a relationship less permanent than that implied in periodic affirmations of the idea of trusteeship.'<sup>3</sup> Britain was willing to acknowledge that the world situation was changing and that colonized peoples were demanding that their voices and their wills be heard. That said, for the time being Britain wanted to maintain control of her colonial possessions, with a promise of freedom and autonomy at an unspecified time in the future. Crawford agrees, noting that during the war '[the] goals of colonialism had become rather like the goals of the Mandate System, at least rhetorically, although the colonial system itself was not fundamentally questioned at this time by the British Cabinet or most members of Parliament.'<sup>4</sup> As we will see, the term 'trusteeship' was still used from time to time (for instance, the Trusteeship System and Trusteeship Council of the United Nations, which replaced the Mandates System). However, Bauerochse states that over time 'the idea of "trusteeship" seemed too passive and paternalistic'<sup>5</sup>, thus more and more countries of the North would look for 'partners' in the South, signaling both 'a relinquishment of power and also [securing] their influence in the future.'<sup>6</sup>

In August 1941, British Prime Minister Churchill and U.S. President Roosevelt jointly signed the Atlantic Charter, which stated that 'they desire to see no

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<sup>2</sup> William Bain, *Between Anarchy and Society: Trusteeship and the Obligations of Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> Bain, *Between Anarchy and Society: Trusteeship and the Obligations of Power*, p. 116.

<sup>4</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, p.295.

<sup>5</sup> Bauerochse, *Learning to Live Together*, p. 91.

<sup>6</sup> Bauerochse, *Learning to Live Together*, p. 93.

territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned' and 'they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live.'<sup>7</sup> Crawford states that

[the] parts of the Atlantic Charter that dealt with self-determination sparked immediate debate. Not surprisingly, the Labour Party claimed the Charter applied to the colonies, as well as to Europe, while... Churchill told the House of Commons that [it] was intended to apply only to the states under Nazi control and was 'quite a separate problem from the progressive evolution of self-governing institutions in regions whose peoples owe allegiance to the British crown.'<sup>8</sup>

In summing up the feelings of those who thought it necessary to retain the colonial empire, Home Secretary Herbert Morrison remarked in 1943 that '[it] would be ignorant, dangerous nonsense to talk about grants of full self-government to many of the dependent territories for some time to come. In those instances it would be like giving a child of ten a latch key, a bank account, and a shot-gun.'<sup>9</sup> These protestations notwithstanding, the colonial experiment was to prove unsustainable in the post World War II world.

In Asia, most decolonization took place within the first half-decade following the war. In India, nationalism had been on the rise for many years. According to Darwin, during the war the 'British had been forced ... to mobilize Indian resources. Now they would have to pay the price demanded by Indian nationalists and Muslim sub-nationalists, or face a political revolt. They embarked upon the twisting path of concession that led ... to the fateful promise of Indian independence at the end of the war.'<sup>10</sup> Brown notes that the 'British were pragmatic imperialists, and extremely cost-conscious. They moved down the road of constitutional reform ... not primarily out of idealism but as a mode of placating significant local opinion and maintaining cheap government.'<sup>11</sup> Thus, for India (and Pakistan), independence came in 1947.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> 'Atlantic Charter', <[www.internet-esq.com/ussaugusta/atlantic1.htm](http://www.internet-esq.com/ussaugusta/atlantic1.htm)>

<sup>8</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, pp. 296-297.

<sup>9</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, p. 297.

<sup>10</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 419.

<sup>11</sup> Brown, 'South Asia', p. 242.

<sup>12</sup> Indian independence led to the creation of the state of Pakistan (including what is present-day Bangladesh). This split was 'caused by the emergence of a specifically Muslim sense of political identity which culminated in the Muslim League under M.A. Jinnah, demanding special status and eventually a state for a distinctive Muslim "nation"... thus creating a predominantly Hindu India (though leaving in India a sizeable Muslim minority constituting about 11 per cent of the population), and Pakistan.... The process of partition was violent and bitter, and its legacy in memory and suspicion remains.' Brown, 'South Asia', pp. 242-243.

Independence came for 'Indonesia and Vietnam in 1945, the Philippines in 1946, Burma, Ceylon, Korea, and Malaysia in 1948, and China in 1949.'<sup>13</sup>

In Africa, decolonization happened more slowly, and 'while the old colonial powers were struggling to hang on in Asia, they thought in Africa that they had time to play with. Bureaucratic blueprints for the transfer of power in the indefinite future and after a series of stages ... flowed from the pens of colonial planners.'<sup>14</sup> World War II was, however, very different from the previous world war in how it affected Africans. During World War I, while fighting took place in Africa, very few Africans traveled outside the continent. As Crawford points out, this was not the case during World War II: '[By] June 1940, almost 10 percent of the French army in France was African. More than 370,000 Africans served in the British armed forces and tens of thousands more worked as forced labor on farms and in factories.'<sup>15</sup> Ranger notes that

...members of African regiments and Labour Brigades saw service in North Africa, in Italy, in Germany itself, and in the Burma Campaign. These men were recruited in the name of a war for democracy and against racist dictatorships. Grandiose declarations like the Atlantic Charter raised the hopes of African intellectuals. All over Africa they declared that the price of African loyalty to the Empire must be development and democracy. In this way, the dream of modernization revived among Africans.<sup>16</sup>

Many of those returning to Africa had new experiences and, because of their service, new skills. Returning to the subservience of prewar times was not an option.

The rise of nationalism in Africa can be seen in various world gatherings. In 1945, the Sixth Pan-African Congress was held in Manchester, England. While previous Pan-African Congresses had taken place (in 1900, 1919, 1921, 1923, and 1927), Manchester was different: 'The previous Pan-African Congresses had been dominated by middle-class intellectuals but at Manchester there were workers, trade unionists, a radical student element and no representation from Christian organizations. The emphasis was on African nationalism.'<sup>17</sup> According to Arnold, the Manchester Congress was

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<sup>13</sup> Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, p. 33. It is important to note that China was never completely colonized. The date of 1949 notes the creation of the People's Republic of China after the victory of Mao Zedong and the Communist over the Kuomintang forces.

<sup>14</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 464.

<sup>15</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, p. 294.

<sup>16</sup> Ranger, 'Africa', p. 269.

<sup>17</sup> Guy Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History* (London: Atlantic Books, 2005), p. 11.

attended by such notable leaders-in waiting as Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya and Kwame Nkrumah of the Gold Coast. The atmosphere had changed ... and the scent of independence was in the air. The Congress was to call for an end to colonialism, its members declaring in their manifesto, 'We are determined to be free.' The Congress became a landmark, a starting point for the coming independence struggles. The Congress rejected colonialism in all its forms, its participants equating economic with political imperialism and determining to crush both forms of alleged exploitation so as to achieve their independence.<sup>18</sup>

Though ten years later, another important gathering which involved nationalist leaders from both Asia and Africa took place in April 1955 in the Indonesian city of Bandung. In the conference's opening address, Indonesian President Sukarno spoke about the forces of anti-colonialism present in Asia and Africa:

Irresistible forces have swept the two continents. The mental, spiritual and political face of the whole world has been changed and the process is still not complete. There are new conditions, new concepts, new ideas abroad in the world. Hurricanes of national awakening and reawakening have swept over the land, shaking it, changing it, changing it for the better.<sup>19</sup>

As leaders of more than twenty-five countries and colonies met, those in attendance began to speak about the 'Bandung Spirit': 'What they meant was simple: that the colonized world had now emerged to claim its space in world affairs, not just as an adjunct of the First or Second Worlds, but as a player in its own right. Furthermore, the Bandung Spirit was a refusal of both economic subordination and cultural suppression – two of the major policies of imperialism.'<sup>20</sup> Darwin asserts that '[behind] the speeches ... was a vision of an Asia and Africa in which outside influence would exist only on sufferance. It was a heroic conception of decolonization that rejected any vestige of post-imperial attachment.... Cultural cooperation between Asians and Africans would replace the old deference to Europe's civilizational claims.'<sup>21</sup> The Bandung Conference and its spirit led to another meeting six years later in 1961, where twenty-two states from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe gathered in Belgrade in 1961 to form the Non-Aligned Movement, a reaction against the rise of the United States and Soviet Union as opposing post-colonial forces. These conferences and congresses were important for nationalist leaders as they offered an opportunity to meet one another, share ideas about their futures, and have their voices heard on a world stage.

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<sup>18</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 10.

<sup>19</sup> Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, p. 33.

<sup>20</sup> Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>21</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 444.



Another tool used by nationalists to end colonialism was the forum created by the United Nations. Formed in 1945, the UN, which took the place of the collapsed League of Nations, ‘was intended by its framers to provide a more imaginative, complex, and realistic framework for collective controls over the use of force than that of the League Covenant.’<sup>22</sup> While at its founding its main concern was restoring world peace, it also assisted in the process of decolonization as it provided a place for newly independent states to have their voices and interests heard. Principles such as racial equality, as well as the sovereign equality of states, were expressed throughout the UN Charter.<sup>23</sup> For example, Article 1(2) stated that one purpose of the Charter was to ‘develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples....’<sup>24</sup> The UN Charter also replaced the Mandates System with a Trusteeship System and Trusteeship Council, and Chapter XI on the Declaration Regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories was important for those seeking independence. The Declaration read in part:

Members of the United Nations which have or assume responsibilities for the administration of territories whose peoples have not yet attained a full measure of self-government recognize the principle that the interests of the inhabitants of these territories are paramount, and accept as a sacred trust the obligation to promote to the utmost, within the system of international peace and security established by the present Charter, the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories....<sup>25</sup>

According to Arnold, ‘[in] the years after 1945 the United Nations would be appealed to again and again by African nationalists as they escalated their pressures and demands for independence from the colonial powers and saw the United Nations as their most important ally in this regard.’<sup>26</sup> As more and more colonies gained independence and joined the UN, their cumulative effect was to add voices to the world-wide chorus calling for the end of colonialism.

An important resolution relating to colonialism, passed in 1960, was Resolution 1514, entitled the “Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples” which said that all dependent people had a “right to

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<sup>22</sup> Adam Roberts, ‘Towards a World Community? The United Nations and International Law’ in Michael Howard, and William Roger Lewis (eds.) *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 309.

<sup>23</sup> Roberts, ‘Towards a World Community? The United Nations and International Law’, pp. 310-311.

<sup>24</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, p. 311.

<sup>25</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 14. It is interesting that, like the wording in the League Covenant covering the mandates, the religious term ‘sacred trust’ is used here as well.

<sup>26</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 14.

complete independence.” Drafted and pushed by the African and Asian members of the UN that had recently won their independence, the language closely resembled that used at the 1955 Bandung Conference.’<sup>27</sup> By gathering together for support and planning, as well as using the organs of the United Nations, colonized peoples were able to articulate their desires and have their voices heard as never before.

In the first months of 1960, British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan toured Africa to meet with both colonial and nationalist leaders. As part of his trip, he visited South Africa to see President Verwoerd and address Parliament. According to Arnold, in his parliamentary speech, ‘having spoken of the constant emergence of independent nations in Europe, he said: “Today the same thing is happening in Africa.... The wind of change is blowing through this continent, and, whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact.”’<sup>28</sup> While his words may not have been welcomed by the architects and enforcers of the Apartheid state, they nonetheless proved to be true. Following Ghana’s lead in 1957, by the end of the 1960’s there were forty-three independent African states.<sup>29</sup>

While the speed at which decolonization took place is staggering, the hopes and dreams of these peoples, expressed in the ‘Bandung Spirit’, were to prove to be difficult to realize. Darwin states that ‘decolonization in Africa was not a clean break with the imperial past, or a ticket of entry into a “world of nations”. The new African states inherited the weaknesses of their colonial forerunners – into whose shoes they had stepped after the briefest transition.’<sup>30</sup> Arnold agrees with this assessment, but also acknowledges that, at least in the 1960s, nationals of former colonies were full of hope for the future:

The rapid end of the European empires ... all in the course of a few years and all on the same continental landmass, where affected territories were contiguous to one another, meant the creation of a power vacuum that was bound to lead to years of violence in the decades that followed.... None of the new states was economically strong and most were economic pygmies in world terms.... These problems, however, lay in the future. The immediate reaction to ... independence was one of joy: freedom had been achieved at last.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, p. 317.

<sup>28</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 49.

<sup>29</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 68.

<sup>30</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 467.

<sup>31</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 52.

## 7.2 The Revolution of 'Development'

As war ended, of the victors only the United States had emerged with a healthy and growing economy. As Esteva states, '[at] the end of World War II, the United States was a formidable and incessant productive machine.... It was indisputedly at the centre of the world. ...And they wanted to consolidate that hegemony and make it permanent.'<sup>32</sup> Darwin agrees, stating that 'American leaders now enjoyed the margin of power to make alliances on terms that secured American primacy.... The result was the creation of an American "system" imperial in all but name.'<sup>33</sup> The building of this system started even before the end of the war, with Western leaders meeting in July 1944 to discuss the form of a postwar economic system. According to Lyon, the Bretton Woods Agreement, from which developed the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, 'in effect recognized and institutionalized the emphatic primacy of the US economy in world economic matters.'<sup>34</sup>

The next order of business for the United States was to help rebuild war torn Western Europe by means of the Marshall Plan: thus, 'from 1947 to 1953, the United States pumped \$13 billion into Western Europe and raised industrial production to prewar levels (and in some cases, higher). Between 1948 and 1953, industrial production increased by over a third, and agricultural growth spiraled upward.'<sup>35</sup> But contemporaneously, when many countries in Asia were gaining independence and Africa was quickly moving in the same direction, the question was whether there was going to be the same kind of monetary injections into the South? According to Prashad, '[nothing] similar came the way of the formerly colonized world. Instead of such a vast transfer of wealth in the new nations, the policymakers in the United States and Western Europe held that modest aid and some technology transfers alongside minimal state intervention on the state and interstate level would help engender growth in the new nations.'<sup>36</sup>

Instead of direct monetary investment, the United States and other Western nations sought to 'develop' the nations and peoples of the South. Rist says that this

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<sup>32</sup> Gustavo Esteva, 'Development' in Wolfgang Sachs (ed.) *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power* (London: Zed Books, 1992), p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 469.

<sup>34</sup> Peter Lyon, 'The Old Commonwealth' in Michael Howard, and William Roger Lewis (eds.) *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 298.

<sup>35</sup> Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, p. 65.

<sup>36</sup> Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, p. 65.

process was inaugurated, quite literally, during President Harry Truman's inaugural address on January 20, 1949, when he laid out his Four Point Plan, outlining his vision of America's role in the world. In his first three points, Truman said that America would continue to support the United Nations (unlike the change in American policy towards the League of Nations following World War I); 'would keep up the European reconstruction effort by means of the Marshall Plan; and ... would create a joint defense organization (NATO) to meet the Soviet threat.'<sup>37</sup> It was point four, however, which dealt the subject of development. Truman asserted that 'we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.... The old imperialism – exploitation for foreign profit – has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on concepts of democratic fair-dealing.'<sup>38</sup>

When looking at the new financial system put in place by the West, as well as the labeling of the majority of the world's inhabitants as 'underdeveloped', one can question how much was really going to change for peoples living in the South. While acknowledging that Truman's speech was full of high-minded phrases like 'peace-loving peoples' and 'democratic fair-dealing', Esteva contends that what really happened was the revealing of America's post-colonial intentions to remake the world in its image:

By using for the first time in such a context the word, 'underdevelopment', Truman changed the meaning of development and created an emblem, a euphemism, used ever since to allude either discreetly or inadvertently to the era of American hegemony.... A new perception of one's self, and of the other, was suddenly created.... On that day, two billion people became underdeveloped. In a real sense, from that time on, they ceased being what they were, in all their diversity, and were transmogrified into an inverted mirror of other's reality: a mirror that belittles them and sends them to the end of the queue.<sup>39</sup>

Easterly agrees, noting that after World War II,

[a] shift in language (and also in thought) occurred.... Verbiage about racial superiority, the tutelage of backward peoples, and people not ready to rule themselves went into the wastebasket. Self-rule and decolonization became universal principles. The West exchanged the old racist coinage for new currency. 'Uncivilized' became 'underdeveloped.' 'Savage peoples' became

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<sup>37</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 70.

<sup>38</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 71.

<sup>39</sup> Esteva, 'Development', p. 6.

the 'third world.' There was a genuine change of heart away from racism and towards respect for equality, but a paternalistic and coercive strain survived.<sup>40</sup>

What Esteva and Easterly suggest is that despite the change in vocabulary and the end of the colonial system, many of the old colonial attitudes of Western superiority gained new currency and life.

One of the ways in which this 'paternalistic and coercive strain' lived on was in the continued belief that societies and peoples developed along similar lines throughout history, with the West, of course, seen as the most evolved or developed. Previously, especially during the era of high colonialism, this process of development had been based primarily on race. However, due to growing doubts about the validity of scientific racism in the second and third decades of the twentieth century, as well as the revulsion of the world in the face of Nazi atrocities following World War II, 'views about the "darker" races were ... challenged and revised. The argument moved forward by analogy: if anti-Semitism was wrong, other forms of racism were wrong. Colonialism could no longer be normal or legitimate once scientific racism was dethroned.'<sup>41</sup> With colonialism ending and arguments from Social Darwinism refuted, the main way of understanding the dichotomy between the West and the rest became economic. One of the architects of post World War II development theory that perpetuated this belief was W.W. Rostow, who published his seminal work, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, in 1960. Rostow proposed that it was 'possible to identify all societies, in their economic dimensions, as lying within one of five categories: the traditional society, the preconditions for take-off, the take-off, the drive to maturity, and the age of high mass-consumption.'<sup>42</sup>

When looking at the world, Rostow held that the United States and western Europe had reached the last stage, the age of high mass-consumption. Other countries, like Russia, were in the drive to maturity. But the countries of the South were at the beginning stages: 'The central fact about the future of world power is the acceleration of the preconditions or the beginnings of take-off in the southern half of the world: South-East Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.'<sup>43</sup> Rostow believed that the evolutionary process, from the preconditions to take-off to the age of

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<sup>40</sup> Easterly, *The White Man's Burden*, p. 24.

<sup>41</sup> Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, p. 309.

<sup>42</sup> W.W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), p. 4.

<sup>43</sup> Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth*, p. 126.

high mass-consumption, took an average of sixty years; thus, he believed that 'looking ahead ... it can be said with reasonable confidence that the world will contain many new nations which have reached maturity.'<sup>44</sup>

Rostow's theories of development were quite influential. The decade of the 1960s was declared by the United Nations as the First Development Decade. John F. Kennedy was greatly influenced by his theories (Rostow was one of his advisors) and claimed in 1961 that 'existing foreign aid programs and concepts are largely unsatisfactory ... we intend during this coming decade of development to achieve turnaround in the fate of the less-developed world, looking toward the ultimate day ... when foreign aid will no longer be needed.'<sup>45</sup> But for this dream to take place, the West had to see itself as the tutor for the rest of the world; however, not like a parent, rather an older sibling trying to help the younger grow up: 'The new "development/underdevelopment" dichotomy proposed a different relationship, in keeping with the new Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the progressive globalization of the system of States. In place of the hierarchical subordination of colony to metropolis, every State was the equal *de jure*, even if it was not (yet) *de facto*.'<sup>46</sup> As Easterly notes,

soon was born the development expert, the heir to the missionary and the colonial officer.... Implementing this crusade brought an alphabet soup of agencies created after World War II: the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the African Development Bank (AFDB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and many more.<sup>47</sup>

While the development debate was driven in large part by the West, many leaders of the newly independent nations of the South were not fooled by the change in language; they realized that, no matter the number of former colonies gaining independence, the rich countries were still seeking control of resources and finance. At the previously mentioned Bandung Conference, the final communiqué dealt with economic cooperation. Prashad notes that

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<sup>44</sup> Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth*, p. 127.

<sup>45</sup> Easterly, *The White Man's Burden*, p. 25.

<sup>46</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 72.

<sup>47</sup> Easterly, *The White Man's Burden*, pp. 25-26.

[amid] the crucial points on bilateral trade and liaisons from one state to another, the points showed a determined effort by the Bandung states to stave off the imperialist pressure brought on them.... Under colonial conditions, the darker nations had been reduced to being providers of raw materials and consumers of manufactured goods produced in Europe and the United States. The Bandung proposals called for the formerly colonized states to diversify their economic base, develop indigenous manufacturing capacity, and thereby break the colonial chain.<sup>48</sup>

However, while wanting to control the process, the participants also completely bought into the idea of development and of ‘catching up’ to the richer countries. Rist notes that, at Bandung, development ‘was seen as a universal necessity that would come everywhere at the end of a major economic effort, to be stimulated by foreign capital and the introduction of modern technology.’<sup>49</sup> This desire on the part of leaders in the South to at once develop and integrate into a world economy, while at the same time escaping the control and coercion of the West, was simply not realistic. Arnold notes that, in this era of development, ‘[the] ex-imperial powers and the other industrial democracies were prepared to co-operate with the new Third World countries but only in ways which would do as little as possible to undermine the existing distribution of power and influence within international society.’<sup>50</sup>

### 7.3 The Whitby Meeting of the International Missionary Council (1947)

As the post-World War II era emerged, ecumenical leaders began to take stock of conditions around the world. It was clear to them that, unlike the end of the First World War, there would be no returning to the *status quo*. In 1946, J. Merle Davis wrote that

[the] New Age dawns upon a world that is half free and half governed by and dependent upon alien races.... This half-world is seething with unrest, discontent, the thirst for self-determination and complete freedom, and this will never cease until these objectives are achieved. Irrespective of their stage of development and their present capacity for self-government, each of the dependent peoples has taken seriously the ‘Four Freedoms’ of the Atlantic Charter and has applied them to itself. The enormous difficulties of the dominant powers in implementing, immediately and fully, the Four Freedoms, and their hesitancy in fulfilling at once the hopes of these governed, are impatiently brushed aside and labelled as insincerity.... These restless millions draw sinister implications from the fact that the very nations which

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<sup>48</sup> Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, p. 44.

<sup>49</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 87.

<sup>50</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, pp. 57-58.

dominate them and control their political destinies are trying to christianize them. It is in this half-world of frustrated hope, disillusionment and suspicion that the Church of Christ will carry on its mission in the new age.<sup>51</sup>

In writing specifically about the war's implications for Africans who served in the military, Doig notes that '[he] has learned new skills and realizes that he, an African, given the opportunity, can compare very favourably with the white man in all the varied business of war.... The African wants an outlet for his country and perhaps even more for his own advancement in that it means financial security.'<sup>52</sup> Doig also wrote that '[this] African who has envisaged the development of his own future has become a shrewd observer and critic of Europeans and European ways of life and we have definitely fallen in prestige. He has seen the moral weaknesses of our civilization often in distressing ways and never again will he accept the white man at face value.'<sup>53</sup> Finally, Ehrenberg foresaw that with nationalism on the rise, at some point in the future, the relationship between the missions and the World churches would be affected. He believed that 'the people among whom the mission is working sooner or later [will] reject colonial status and demand of the mission that they shall become "the Church", ready to establish the relationship of its own church life to the political order, to the community and to the State.'<sup>54</sup>

In the midst of these conditions, the International Missionary Council called for a meeting to be held from July 5-24, 1947, in Whitby, Canada, to assess the state of the missionary movement. Hogg notes that this meeting, unlike Jerusalem and Madras, was not a meeting of the Council but rather 'an enlarged meeting of the Committee of the Council. Yet in retrospect Whitby's importance grew. Its significance derived from its being the first occasion after World War II when Christians from around the world could assemble in a truly representative meeting. That fact plus Whitby's spirit and accomplishment accord it a place in the succession of "the great conferences."<sup>55</sup> A total of 112 people from forty countries attended

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<sup>51</sup> J. Merle Davis, 'Mission Strategy in the New Age' in *International Review of Missions* 35 (1946), p. 303.

<sup>52</sup> Andrew B. Doig, 'The Christian Church and Demobilization in Africa' in *International Review of Missions* 35 (1946), p. 175.

<sup>53</sup> Doig, 'The Christian Church and Demobilization in Africa', p. 176.

<sup>54</sup> Hans P. Ehrenberg, 'After the Totalitarian World Revolution: Some Thoughts on Church and State in the World Church after the War' in *International Review of Missions* 36 (1947), p. 87.

<sup>55</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 335.



Whitby, with an enlarged number 'to bring a higher proportion of representatives of the younger churches than earlier gatherings had achieved....'<sup>56</sup>

While there is no doubt that the participants at the conference understood that their world was undergoing profound and unprecedented changes (the conference theme was 'Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World'), one must not assume that the post-war future was clearly discernible. As Newbigin notes, '[it] had not yet become clear how drastic were the changes which the world had undergone as the result of the convulsions of the war years. The complete extinction of the colonial pattern ... was still in the future. The extent of the spiritual damage which the old Christendom had suffered could not yet be assessed.'<sup>57</sup> In that light, it is easy to understand that, while looking forward and planning for the future, Whitby also looked back at previous conferences for guidance, most notably Madras: 'The virtually untouched 1938 findings were still relevant in 1947, and what emerged from Whitby was meant not to supplant but to supplement them in a changing world scene.'<sup>58</sup> As delegates gathered, they came with the understanding that '[the] determinative characteristic of our day is that it is a revolutionary age, revolutionary not merely in the obvious sense that it is marked by widespread and far-reaching economic, social, and political revolutions ... but, in that far profounder sense, that we are witnessing the break-up of the underlying structures of contemporary culture.... [It] may be said that we are moving into the "post-modern" era.'<sup>59</sup>

Their first task was to report about the various areas from which they came, sharing how the war had affected the communities and the churches. In Asia it was stated that

[virulent] nationalism is finding expression in the new nation-states; economic chaos and inflation and planning jostle each other; new nationalities are born out of the post-fascist turmoil; fragmentation seems the order of the day.... In

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<sup>56</sup> Margaret Sinclair, 'Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World: Whitby, Ontario, 1947' in *International Review of Missions* 37 (1948), p. 3.

<sup>57</sup> Leslie Newbigin, 'Mission to Six Continents' in Harold C. Fey (ed.) *A History of the Ecumenical Movement* Vol. 2 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), p. 177.

<sup>58</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 335. C.W. Ranson notes, in his introduction to the one volume findings of the Whitby conference entitled *Renewal and Advance*, that 'Whitby was not ... an attempt to repeat Tambaram. It was planned on the assumption that most of the tactical findings of Tambaram are still sound and relevant, and that the main task of Whitby was to seek fresh insight on the broad strategy of the missionary task in our sadly shattered world.' C.W. Ranson, 'The Whitby Meeting of the International Missionary Council' in C.W. Ranson (ed.) *Renewal and Advance: Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1948), p. 6.

<sup>59</sup> Henry P. Van Dusen, 'The Common Task: The Greatness and Universality of the Missionary Obligation' in C.W. Ranson (ed.) *Renewal and Advance: Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1948), p. 185.

these areas there are Christian churches, a tiny percentage of any given population but none the less numerically respectable; their existence is a cause of thankfulness and hope, as well as of anxiety and concern.<sup>60</sup>

When turning to Africa, the report notes that

Africa has been opened up by new roads, on a grand scale, by air services, by European troops in Africa and African troops serving in Burma and elsewhere. The rapid extension of mining and other industries to new areas, especially Central Africa, great new schemes for cotton growing ..., the transfer, temporary or prolonged, of large sections of the population to new districts, have produced a dislocation of tribal society and a restlessness and frustration which are reaching danger point. Rural economy has deteriorated through deforestation, erosion and destructive pests; widespread malnutrition works both as cause and as effect; welfare services, however necessary, are mere palliatives to treat a disease whose remedy must be a new integration of the African economy at a higher level.<sup>61</sup>

Even with these societal changes taking place, Bingle also noted that the African church 'has grown amazingly. In Central Africa ... the C.M.S. reports an increase of membership from 58,000 in 1900 to 1,064,000 in 1945; these figures could be paralleled by other societies working elsewhere in Africa.'<sup>62</sup>

With political and social revolutions taking place around the globe, the delegates at Whitby had to discuss how churches should respond. First, it was noted that, if it was to hold onto its prophetic voice, the church must stay out of direct involvement of either aligning too closely with the *status quo* or of revolutionary forces seeking its overthrow:

Where the Church has become too closely identified with the existing order, it loses its power to judge and to correct; if it becomes too closely identified with the revolution, it loses the capacity to identify the elements of sinfulness which inhere in every human activity, even the best, and abdicates its right to be the candid critic. The Church is always revolutionary; but that is not to say that it is to become subject to any revolution carried out on a secular or unspiritual basis.<sup>63</sup>

Secondly, there was a renewed call for missionaries and societies to be involved in holistic, *humanitarian* mission; what Jerusalem had referred to as

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<sup>60</sup> E.J. Bingle, 'World in Ferment: The Church in its World Setting' in C.W. Ranson (ed.) *Renewal and Advance: Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World* (London, Edinburgh House Press, 1948), 32.

<sup>61</sup> Bingle, 'World in Ferment: The Church in its World Setting', p. 45.

<sup>62</sup> Bingle, 'World in Ferment: The Church in its World Setting', p. 45.

<sup>63</sup> Stephen C. Neill, 'World in Ferment: A Revolutionary Church' in C.W. Ranson (ed.) *Renewal and Advance: Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1948), p. 74.

‘comprehensive’ mission.<sup>64</sup> One of the official statements that came out of Whitby assented that

[the] power of the Gospel is little felt unless it is proclaimed by life as well as by word. The Church is much more than a philanthropic society; but from the earliest time it has been concerned about all the needs and sufferings of man. When true to itself, it shows the most tender concern for the feeble and neglected; it is filled with a passion for social justice and the righting of every wrong. The education of the young, the healing of the body, care for orphans and provision for the aged are integral and inseparable parts of the proclamation of the Kingdom of God.<sup>65</sup>

At Whitby, delegates also agreed that ‘[as] Christians, we are pledged to the service of all those who are hungry or destitute or in need; we are pledged to the support of every movement for the removal of injustice and oppression.’<sup>66</sup>

The most important section of the Whitby report for our purposes, however, was the recognition that the World churches were maturing, and this called for taking seriously the calls for partnership that had started at the Jerusalem conference in 1928. The new world situation necessitated that delegates at Whitby revisit past resolutions on partnership, for ‘[the] younger churches have survived this world war with diminished resources, while the countries of the older churches have suffered serious dislocation and deterioration. In such a world the missionary movement represented by the International Missionary Council seeks to re-orient itself.’<sup>67</sup> It was also admitted that, although Jerusalem and Madras had called for partnership, ‘[there] is perhaps no aspect of missionary policy and practice which has been the subject of more missionary discussion in recent years than that of the relationship of the older and younger churches. Nor is there any question which has been a more fruitful source of controversy and frustration.’<sup>68</sup>

To try and facilitate honest and open discussion on the subject of partnership, ‘the representatives of the older and younger Churches met separately....’<sup>69</sup> Each

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<sup>64</sup> It is important to note that, at this point, the calls were simply reiterations of the recommendations of past conferences. In 1947, the economies and infrastructure of the European countries were still in ruins. The Marshall Plan and monies from the United States did not start flowing to Europe until 1947, so the rebuilding of Europe was the main concern; the development of the South was not yet a priority.

<sup>65</sup> *Witness of a Revolutionary Church: Statements issued by the Committee of the International Missionary Council* (London: International Missionary Council, 1947), p. 12; hereafter cited as *Witness of a Revolutionary Church*.

<sup>66</sup> ‘Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World’ in C.W. Ranson (ed.) *Renewal and Advance: Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1948), p. 215.

<sup>67</sup> Bingle, ‘The Church in its World Setting’, p. 57.

<sup>68</sup> Ranson, ‘The Whitby Meeting of the International Missionary Council’, p. 12.

<sup>69</sup> Newbigin, ‘Mission to Six Continents’, p. 177.

group produced a paper, and according to the official report of the conference, 'not one single major difference of judgement came to light; and they were wrought without much difficulty into a single statement which the delegates adopted as a clear expression of a common mind.'<sup>70</sup> The statement was entitled 'Partners in Obedience.'

In the opening paragraphs of 'Partners in Obedience', it was recognized that, regardless of past failures, to realize true partnership the new and revolutionary state of the world demanded that churches try and work together:

As we have looked out upon the state of the world, we have been sobered by a realization of the power and passion of the opposing forces which seek to capture the minds of men. We have realized that against such forces a church divided within itself cannot hope to stand, and that the very force of this challenge drives us to cement our union and to perfect our partnership.<sup>71</sup>

It was also agreed that, although there was a tendency to 'continue to use for convenience the familiar terms "older" and "younger" churches, we recognize that the distinction is largely obsolete, and that for the most part the tasks which face the churches in all parts of the world are the same.'<sup>72</sup> While past conferences had said the time had come to pass from paternalism to partnership, Whitby was much more forthright in its statements and, again, the findings were quite contrary to the notion of partnership as trusteeship.

In practical terms, the report covered how partnership was to be lived out in four key areas: personnel, finance, policy, and administration. The section on *personnel* dealt mostly with the work of missionaries and stated that they should not simply be sent but should be invited, and that 'the younger churches have a voice in the selection of those who are to serve in them', as well as 'the right to issue, or to withhold, an invitation for the missionary to return to its service after the first period of leave....'<sup>73</sup> All missionaries were instructed to enter their work 'with a ready determination to accept the leadership of those in positions of responsibility in the younger church'; the World churches were given a pastoral role over the missionary and were asked 'to encourage and support him in times of difficulty and discouragement.'<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Ranson, 'The Whitby Meeting of the International Missionary Council', p.12.

<sup>71</sup> 'Partners in Obedience: The Partnership' in C.W. Ranson (ed.) *Renewal and Advance: Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1948), pp. 173-174.

<sup>72</sup> 'Partners in Obedience: The Partnership', p. 174. It is interesting that, after saying that the terms 'older' and 'younger' are largely obsolete, these terms are continuously used throughout the report.

<sup>73</sup> 'Partners in Obedience: The Partnership', p. 176.

<sup>74</sup> 'Partners in Obedience: The Partnership', p. 178.

In the area of *finance* the report covers a number of topics. First, when discussing the salaries of missionaries as compared to nationals, it was admitted that ‘disparity in income between the two classes of workers has been in the past and still can be a source of friction and of the impairment of fellowship.’<sup>75</sup> The report gave a number of guidelines for dealing with these issues, including that ‘[continuous] and strenuous efforts must be made by all churches to raise the standard of living of the workers on the lowest economic levels and to lessen the disparity between them and the most highly paid.’<sup>76</sup> On the subject of financial assistance given by wealthier churches, the report stated that ‘[real] partnership involves the grace of receiving as well as the grace of giving. Within the partnership there is no reason why churches which are economically weak should hesitate to receive help from those which are ... strong. It is taken for granted that no Christian body will try to take advantage of its financial strength to secure dominance over any other.’<sup>77</sup> That said, however, to try and safeguard against wealthier churches using their financial strength for their own advantage, it was recommended that, for any monies received, the ‘final responsibility for the expenditure of funds must remain with the church of the area in which the money is to be spent....’<sup>78</sup> Finally, it was admitted that the findings of J. Merle Davis at Madras concerning the need to improve the economic and social environments of the World churches still applied to the post-war situation. Churches and missionaries were encouraged to seek out ways to strengthen the financial position of the churches and the communities in which they existed.

In the area of setting *policy*, there were several recommendations. It was stated that ‘[deputations] from older churches and mission boards to lands of the younger churches are still of great value. But members of such deputations should do their utmost to enter into the life of the church which they visit, to associate with its leaders, and as far as possible to understand all its problems from within.’<sup>79</sup> Visits by members of World Christianity to the Global churches were also encouraged, with those from the World churches being given opportunities to ‘work as temporary pastors of churches or as members of the staffs of seminaries in the lands of the older

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<sup>75</sup> ‘Partners in Obedience: The Partnership’, p. 178.

<sup>76</sup> ‘Partners in Obedience: The Partnership’, p. 179.

<sup>77</sup> ‘Partners in Obedience: The Partnership’, pp. 179-180.

<sup>78</sup> ‘Partners in Obedience: The Partnership’, p. 180.

<sup>79</sup> ‘Partners in Obedience: The Partnership’, p. 182.

churches.’<sup>80</sup> The most radical appeal was for mission boards to appoint members of the World churches as members or even secretaries; it was believed that ‘[this] is one of the points at which the reality of the partnership can be most plainly emphasized, to the great benefit of both sending and receiving churches.’<sup>81</sup>

The final section covered *administration*, which dealt chiefly with the running of institutions such as hospitals and schools. In this section, not much new ground is broken, for when looking at the economic situations of the majority of the World churches, along with the financial means necessary to run these institutions, it was ‘recognized that for a long period help and support from the older churches will be needed.’<sup>82</sup>

Hogg notes that, when putting Whitby in its historical perspective, ‘Jerusalem was the first milepost on the road to equality of spirit and shared purpose between older and younger churches. Madras had marked further significant progress. Those who had shared in all three conferences agreed that Whitby’s experience of total equality was without precedent.’<sup>83</sup> While Hogg is no doubt correct that the findings discussed above were truly far advanced of those from previous meetings, it is also true that some of the findings and resolutions were still problematic. First, delegates from the Global churches were aware that there were some very real issues with the *home base*. While advances had been made in how missions were presented to the person ‘in the pew’,

[the] propaganda which will ensure support on these new terms has hardly begun. The missionary appeal in Western Europe and North America is being made in terms which are already out of date. It took two generations to reach the present appeal as distinct from the nineteenth century type of appeal; it will be disastrous if the new change-over is not made swiftly, since the relations of older and younger churches will be falsified and the ecumenical vision will disappear in the bitterness of frustration. The missionary education movement of a previous generation which produced admirable material, yet somehow failed, must be recast in a new mould and given a new urgency.<sup>84</sup>

Second, while the calls for partnership were genuine, the arena in which partnership would take place was primarily in the lands of the World churches, especially areas where Christianity had never been preached. ‘Partners in Obedience’ states that ‘[on]

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<sup>80</sup> ‘Partners in Obedience: The Partnership’, p. 182.

<sup>81</sup> ‘Partners in Obedience: The Partnership’, p. 182.

<sup>82</sup> ‘Partners in Obedience: The Partnership’, p. 183.

<sup>83</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 340.

<sup>84</sup> Bingle, ‘The Church in its World Setting’, pp. 25-26.

older and younger churches alike, the demand of the hour is the establishment, at the earliest possible date, of pioneer work in all those parts of the world in which the Gospel has not yet been preached and where the Church has not yet taken root.<sup>85</sup> As Newbiggin notes, '[the] fact that the "younger churches" are also partners with the older in the evangelization of Europe and North America had not yet become clear.'<sup>86</sup> Finally, it was noted that feelings of inferiority on the part of the World churches should end, and that they should 'now put away once for all every thwarting sense of dependence on the older churches, and that they will take their stand firmly on the true ground of absolute spiritual equality....'<sup>87</sup> According to Utuk, '[this] was a marvelous statement but it bordered more on wishful thinking than reality, given the continuing problem of inadequate preparation for self-reliance on the part of the Asian and African churches and mission societies themselves.'<sup>88</sup>

In conclusion, while the above mentioned issues are very real and would continue to pose problems for the living out of Whitby's resolutions, there is no doubt that, on the subject of partnership, there was much new ground broken in its findings. That said, the delegates were well aware of how difficult it would be turn the *rhetoric* into *reality*. Ranson noted that '[it] cannot be emphasized too strongly that the outworkings of these accepted principles will remain a complex and delicate task which will make large demands on the imagination, patience, and Christian forbearance of both partners.'<sup>89</sup> Sinclair wrote that to live out partnership

involves some very particular issues in the relations between missions and churches, missionaries and nationals, at the point of practical obedience to Christ's Great Commission. Unless delegates can return from the Canadian meetings conscious of having found a new liberation from some of the dilemmas which have affected mission policy at these points in recent years, the highest hopes concerning this programme will remain unrealized.'<sup>90</sup>

Despite delegates' best hopes and efforts, the 'dilemmas which have affected mission policy' continued to make the living out and attainment of wonderfully worded resolutions exceedingly difficult.

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<sup>85</sup> 'Partners in Obedience: The Partnership', p. 175.

<sup>86</sup> Newbiggin, 'Mission in Six Continents', p. 177.

<sup>87</sup> 'Partners in Obedience: The Partnership', p. 175.

<sup>88</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 222.

<sup>89</sup> Ranson, 'The Whitby Meeting of the International Missionary Council', p. 13.

<sup>90</sup> Margaret Sinclair, 'Editorial' in *International Review of Missions* 36 (1947), pp. 123-124.

#### 7.4 First Assembly of the World Council of Churches – Amsterdam (1948)

When the World Council of Churches (WCC) was inaugurated in August 1948, it was the realization of a dream at least twenty-five years in the making, as well as the culmination of much hard work by ecumenical leaders such as John Mott, William Paton, and J.H. Oldham.<sup>91</sup> Present at the Assembly were 351 delegates, representing 147 churches in forty-four countries. The international church, for so many years divided along confessional and other lines, was uniting, if not organically then at least cooperatively. The Message adopted by the Assembly states:

[God] has brought us together here at Amsterdam. We are one in acknowledging Him as our God and Saviour. We are divided from one another not only in matters of faith, order, and tradition, but also by pride of nation, class and race. But Christ has made us His own, and He is not divided. In seeking Him, we find one another. Here at Amsterdam we have committed ourselves afresh to Him, and have covenanted with one another in constituting this World Council of Churches. We intend to stay together.<sup>92</sup>

Visser 't Hooft writes that, although the majority of delegates came from Global churches, '[it] was encouraging that the Churches of Asia had sent strong delegations. Africa, with fewer autonomous Churches, was also represented.'<sup>93</sup> Visser 't Hooft's analysis notwithstanding, for the discussion of partnership, it is important to note that, at least at the outset, there were serious problems regarding the place and role of the World churches in the new WCC.

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<sup>91</sup> The concept of a World Council of Churches can be traced to a number of sources, including articles by Archbishop Nathan Söderblom in 1919 and J.H. Oldham in 1920. For a history and background of how the World Council of Churches came into being, cf: Willem Adolf Visser 't Hooft, 'The Genesis of the World Council of Churches' in Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill (eds.) *A History of the Ecumenical Movement* Vol 1 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), pp. 697-724. It is important to note that all of the people mentioned (Mott, Paton, and Oldham) not only played critical roles in the formation of the World Council of Churches, but also had been key in the formation and growth of the International Missionary Council. This raises the question: when so much of the leadership was shared, why have two separate ecumenical world bodies? One answer has to do with structure: '[The] International Missionary Council was made of up interdenominational national or regional councils. It was a council of councils. The World Council of Churches included only denominational churches. It was a council of churches. Any thought of integration raised at once the organizational question of fundamental structural differences between the two councils.' Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 347. Although there had been discussions of integration, it was decided in 1947 by the Joint Committee of the WCC and IMC (which had existed from the time of the Madras Conference in 1938, when the WCC was still in the process of formation) 'that the World Council and the International Missionary Council should be known as being "in association with" each other....' Visser 't Hooft, 'The Genesis of the World Council of Churches', p. 717. This allowed the WCC and the IMC to exist as separate organizations while cooperating on a number of joint projects, such as the Churches Commission on International Affairs (CCIA), established in 1947. This relationship would continue until the New Delhi Assembly of 1961, when the IMC merged with the WCC and became the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (see below, pp. 256-257).

<sup>92</sup> *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches: Reports of Sections* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1948), p. 7.

<sup>93</sup> Visser 't Hooft, 'The Genesis of the World Council of Churches', p. 719.



The primary issue for the World churches had to do with power relationships between churches. According to Weber, from the very beginning, '[the] major apprehension concerned the question whether the newly created body would not have a one-sided Western character. The two movements which merged – "Life and Work" and "Faith and Order" – had in their history shown little awareness of the pioneering ecumenical work being done outside eastern and western Europe and North America.'<sup>94</sup> Hogg agrees, stating that 'as a result of its genesis the World Council of Churches had a predominantly Western outlook and was more directly involved in affairs of churches in Europe, Protestant and Orthodox, than in those of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.'<sup>95</sup>

Concretely, the above concerns were exemplified both by the subjects chosen for discussion as well as the perspective from which the topics were discussed. According to Devanesen, 'the Younger Churches on many issues [were] not clearly heard.... The preparatory material was regrettably one-sided, as the contribution from Christian thinkers from the Younger Churches was totally inadequate to give it the needed balance. From the point of view of numbers, too, the representatives of the Younger Churches were swamped in a sea of delegates from the Older Churches.'<sup>96</sup> An excellent example can be seen in the discussions around the issue of the church's response to international affairs. From a Global church perspective, the first WCC Assembly took very progressive and prophetic stands on a number of issues. Concerning human rights, delegates at Amsterdam said that

[we] are profoundly concerned by evidence from many parts of the world of flagrant violations of human rights. Both individuals and groups are subjected to persecution and discrimination on grounds of race, colour, religion, culture or political conviction. Against such actions, whether of governments, officials, or the general public, the churches must take a firm and vigorous stand.<sup>97</sup>

To that end, it was resolved that 'the Assembly calls upon its constituent members to press for the adoption of an International Bill of Human Rights ... [and] to support the adoption of other conventions on human rights, such as those on Genocide and Freedom of Information and the Press, as a step toward the promotion of ...

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<sup>94</sup> Hans-Ruedi Weber, 'Out of All Continents and Nations' in Harold C. Fey (ed.) *A History of the Ecumenical Movement* Vol. 2 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), p. 65.

<sup>95</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations*, p. 348.

<sup>96</sup> Chandran Devanesen, 'Post-Amsterdam Thoughts From a Younger Church' *Ecumenical Review* 2 (Winter 1949), p. 143.

<sup>97</sup> *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches: Reports of Sections*, p. 40.

fundamental freedoms throughout the world.’<sup>98</sup> The Assembly also acknowledged that, historically, many churches (again remembering that Global churches formed a majority in the new WCC) had been supporters of the *status quo* to the neglect of their prophetic roles:

Our churches have often given religious sanction to the special privileges of dominant classes, races, and political groups, and so they have been obstacles to changes necessary in the interests of social justice and political freedom. They have often concentrated on a purely spiritual or other-worldly or individualistic interpretation of their message and their responsibility.<sup>99</sup>

As opposed to giving sanction to those in power, it was stated instead that ‘[justice] ... demands activities be subordinated to social ends.... Man must never be made a mere means for political or economic ends. Man is not made for the State but the State for man. Man is not made for production, but production for man.’<sup>100</sup>

For Amsterdam, however, justice could still mean development along Western lines. For instance, it was stated that ‘[justice] demands that the inhabitants of Asia and Africa ... should have the benefits of more machine production. They may learn to avoid the mechanisation of life and the other dangers of an unbalanced economy which impair the social health of the older industrial peoples.’<sup>101</sup> While one must admit that many in the South longed to benefit from Western technology, it is easy to see the Western influences of this statement which is unclear about how Asia and Africa should follow a Western recipe for development, tying themselves to Western technology, while avoiding the ‘mechanisation of life ... which impair[s] the social health of the older industrial peoples.’ Devanesen criticized the Assembly’s approach to both the UN as well as the issue of Human Rights, saying that ‘it looked at the political problems too much from the point of view of top-level political organization and too little from the point of view of the Church.’<sup>102</sup> He specifically took issue with the speech given by John Foster Dulles, who would become the Secretary of State under President Dwight Eisenhower: ‘Many of us wished an Asian speaker could have followed after John Foster Dulles and Prof. Hromadka had spoken, to tell the difficulties which the Anglo-American bloc is creating for other peoples of the world. It might have given a new perspective on the whole discussion of the East-West

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<sup>98</sup> *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches: Reports of Sections*, p. 44.

<sup>99</sup> *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches: Reports of Sections*, p. 27.

<sup>100</sup> *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches: Reports of Sections*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>101</sup> *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches: Reports of Sections*, pp. 26-27.

<sup>102</sup> Devanesen, ‘Post-Amsterdam Thoughts From a Younger Church’, p. 145.

conflict. But what chance did a Malayan or an Indonesian delegate have in the atmosphere which prevailed?’<sup>103</sup> He also questioned if the churches could, in any real and significant way, really be unified in solidarity. As he saw it,

[many] in the lands of the Younger Churches feel they are pawns in the game of power politics which is being played by Moscow and Washington. Political decisions taken in lands that are centres of power have a world-wide effect.... The approach of the Churches to international affairs appears like a form of pious nihilism full of sentimental aspirations that are not taken seriously. For example, when the Churches talk about liberty they are often thinking of a religious liberty unrelated to the poverty and exploitation which prevails in the lands of the Younger Churches. We want to know how the Church can preach a Gospel in international affairs which is free of any social, economic, national or racial bias.’<sup>104</sup>

These types of questions were asked at Amsterdam and would, in the future, continue to challenge Global church paternalism in the WCC.

While there is much to celebrate when looking at the history of the formation of the WCC and its first assembly, it is clear that for issues of partnership and mutuality, Amsterdam was far too focused on Western issues and seeing the solutions for the world through Western eyes. However, despite the problems that would have to be faced, it seems that the delegates present were committed to working across denominational and geographical lines to find solutions. In the report of Section I, entitled ‘The Universal Church in God’s Design’, it was stated that ‘[we] ... have much to gain from the encounter of the old-established Christian traditions with the vigorous, growing churches whose own traditions are still being formed. We bring these, and all other difficulties between us, into the World Council of Churches in order that we may steadily face them together.’<sup>105</sup> Whatever its limitations, and there were many, the first WCC Assembly set the stage for bringing more and more voices into the ecumenical dialogue and, much as the United Nations did for decolonized peoples, would serve to give the churches of World Christianity a platform from which to speak.

### 7.5 The Growth of Regional Conferences

Before moving on to discuss the next meeting of the IMC, it is important to pause briefly and look at one of the most important decisions delegates at Amsterdam

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<sup>103</sup> Devanesen, ‘Post-Amsterdam Thoughts From a Younger Church’, p. 143.

<sup>104</sup> Devanesen, ‘Post-Amsterdam Thoughts From a Younger Church’, pp. 146-147.

<sup>105</sup> *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches: Reports of Sections*, p. 16.

made, as well as its impact on the partnership debate. In early discussions about how representation on the WCC would be distributed, it was agreed that there should be quotas 'to the several geographical regions or groups, e.g., 90 to North America, 50 to areas of the younger churches.'<sup>106</sup> At Amsterdam, however, there was an amendment passed proposing that representation should also be proportioned according to the various confessions and traditions, such as Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Congregational. That noted, for the younger churches, who inherited their confessional loyalties from the West, regional rather than confessional ecumenicism was important in showing the universality of the gospel. As Weber notes,

[the] insistence on the region does not therefore spring from an isolationist regionalism with the aim to counterbalance the factual Western parochialism of most ecumenical organizations by creating an Asian, African, or Latin American parochialism. The deepest motive is the concern that the Church become truly catholic (out of all the nations of the earth) and truly missionary (sent to all the nations of the earth). Ecumenical regionalism is an act of obedience.<sup>107</sup>

Over the next few years, this emphasis on regional dialogue and cooperation led to the creation of Christian conferences in both Asia and Africa, and created the forum for members of these churches to discuss partnership in meetings in which they set the agenda and led the discussions.

In Asia, a conference was convened in Bangkok (1949), where it was decided that an Asian should represent the regional churches in the WCC. R.B. Manikam was chosen for this role in 1950. In 1957, another conference was held in Prapat, and final plans were made for the creation of an East Asian Christian Conference. Weber writes that, with this conference taking place in Indonesia only two years after Bandung, some in the West feared that

Prapat might become a mere ecclesiastical replica of the Asian-African ... conference in 1955.... But true ecumenical regionalism has nothing to do with the forming of continental or racial power blocs. One of the first acts of the chairman at Prapat was therefore to move the delegates from Australia and New Zealand from the observers section into the full membership section. Ever since the Churches in Australia and New Zealand have played an important role in the EACC.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Samuel McCrea Cavert, 'Preview of Amsterdam' *International Review of Missions* 37 (1948), p. 313.

<sup>107</sup> Weber, 'Out of All Continents and Nations', pp. 66-67.

<sup>108</sup> Weber, 'Out of All Continents and Nations', p. 70.

In 1959, the First Assembly of the East Asian Christian Conference took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaya, and was ‘led by and mainly composed of representatives of indigenous churches in Asia.’<sup>109</sup> At the meeting, ‘some Western friends were asked to situate the Asian churches within the ecumenical movement.’<sup>110</sup> One of these was Lesslie Newbigin, whose topic was ‘The Pattern of Partnership’.

Newbigin began by looking at the practice of partnership up to that time and expressed his conviction that, despite the rhetoric of Madras and Whitby, not much of substance had changed in the relationships between churches of Global and World Christianity. In a foreshadowing of the ‘moratorium debate’ still a decade away, Newbigin said that he found himself ‘tempted to pray that somehow some catastrophe might happen by which foreign aid was cut off and the Church was compelled to learn what it means to depend on God alone. I say tempted – but I have not yielded to that temptation....’<sup>111</sup> Newbigin then described a pattern of false dependence in which he put blame equally on both Global and World churches:

[It] is true that this relation of paternalism on the one hand and infantile dependency on the other hand has been, and still is, distressingly characteristic of missionary operation.... [There] are people who think that being a member of the church means having a statutory right to certain kinds of financial and other perquisites – whether it be scholarships for my children, jobs for my nephews and nieces – or only an occasional trip to the United States for myself – and that there are mission boards in which the idea still lingers that *we* are ultimately responsible for the welfare, guidance, and support of the churches founded by *our* missions.<sup>112</sup>

Newbigin believed, however, that while this false dependency ultimately destroyed any chance for meaningful partnership, there existed the chance for ‘a true dependency which is one of the marks of health. “We are members one of another.” ...[It] is a dependence in which each has something to give as well as something to

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<sup>109</sup> Norman Goodall, ‘John R. Mott and the East Asia Christian Conference’ in *A Decisive Hour for the Christian Mission: The East Asia Christian Conferences 1959 and the John R. Mott Memorial Lectures* (London: SCM Press, 1960), p. 14.

<sup>110</sup> Weber, ‘Out of All Continents and Nations’, p. 71. On the presence of leaders from Global Christianity at the meeting, Goodall notes ‘[the] fact that two out of the three John R. Mott lecturers were European was not an indication of the character of the meeting. The speakers had been invited by Asians to give these lectures at public meetings which were different from the regular business sections of the Conference. At all these normal conference sessions the running was entirely made by Asians. The small number of non-Asians present – mainly as consultants or observers – were vocally quiescent during the meeting. This American and European silence was one of the unique contributions to the deliberations.’ Goodall, ‘John R. Mott and the East Asia Christian Conference’, pp. 14-15.

<sup>111</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, ‘The Pattern of Partnership’ in *A Decisive Hour for the Christian Mission: The East Asia Christian Conferences 1959 and the John R. Mott Memorial Lectures* (London: SCM Press, 1960), p. 35.

<sup>112</sup> Newbigin, ‘The Pattern of Partnership’, p. 38.

receive.’<sup>113</sup> While admitting that the necessary changes would not be easy to achieve, he told delegates gathered at this first assembly of the EACC that ‘nothing will meet our need save the substitution for our present pattern of relationship of a new pattern which will be multilateral rather than bilateral – in which the fundamental principle will be accepted that all have something to give and all have something to receive.’<sup>114</sup> While Newbigin’s call for multilateral relationships would not be heeded by Global church mission boards until the 1970s, as the EACC grew and matured, Asian churches did begin to practise these relationships among themselves. Thus, by the end of the 1960s, Weber could report that ‘[the] change of fraternal workers within Asia and the sending of Asian missionaries ... were fostered. Asian churches remain thus no longer merely receiving Churches. This is also true financially.’<sup>115</sup>

In Africa, decolonization took place a bit later than in most of Asia which had implications on the pace at which African churches were ready to organize on a continental level. One of the key moments, incidentally, was the previously mentioned Bandung Conference of 1955, which ‘strengthened the African political leaders in their quest for a free Africa, and this movement in turn influenced the African Churches’ quest for selfhood.’<sup>116</sup> In January 1958 the first meeting of the All-African Church Conference took place in Ibadan, Nigeria. Although not equal to the Asian conferences in the percentages of indigenous leaders present, Utuk notes that

Ibadan was a much more widely representative gathering of African Christian leaders than had ever before come together for any purpose in Black Africa.... [Of] the actual attendance of 195, 96 African churches were represented; 74 were African men, 16 African women, and 6 Europeans represented the white churches in South Africa. Of the missionaries ... 46 were white, 1 black-American and 1 Asian. Racially, 96 were blacks, 92 whites, and 7 Asians.<sup>117</sup>

But while the percentage of Africans at the conference may have been lower, like the EACC ‘[great] care was ... taken to ensure that the programme of the conference did not bear the trade-mark, “made in Geneva”. It was worked out in Africa by a largely African committee in as much consultation as possible with the churches in each

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<sup>113</sup> Newbigin, ‘The Pattern of Partnership’, p. 41.

<sup>114</sup> Newbigin, ‘The Pattern of Partnership’, p.42.

<sup>115</sup> Weber, ‘Out of All Continents and Nations’, p. 70.

<sup>116</sup> Weber, ‘Out of All Continents and Nations’, p. 74.

<sup>117</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 240.

African territory.’<sup>118</sup> Likewise, ‘foreign missionaries were politely urged to keep quiet and to watch how the new fact of our time was unfolding before their very eyes.’<sup>119</sup> In the political realm, the conference resolved that ‘[we] believe that Christ challenges us to work for the removal of all injustices based on racial discrimination.... We rejoice in the advance of African countries toward self-government and in the liberation of African energies and talents, praying that they may be used for the service of Him Whom we acknowledge to be the Lord of all mankind.’<sup>120</sup> At Ibadan, the churches ‘announced that they were no longer *objects* of, but interested *participants* in mission. In so doing, they helped to put ecumenical development and partnership in a fundamentally new key.’<sup>121</sup> The Ibadan meeting served for Africa what Bangkok and Prapat had served for Asia; it led to the first assembly of the All-Africa Conference of Churches in Kampala in 1963, ‘bringing together representatives from some 100 Churches and forty-two countries in Africa.’<sup>122</sup> Although confessional representation continued to be important to the WCC, the growth of these regional conferences was of great importance on the issue of partnership as churches would continue to meet and discuss their roles in a quickly changing and revolutionary world.

#### 7.6 The Willingen Meeting of the International Missionary Council (1952)

The IMC met again in the German city of Willingen in 1952. The meeting was attended by 190 delegates, and while it was noted that most representatives of the World churches were missionaries, with only about forty nationals of the World churches present, the official report of the conference states that ‘[it] was, nevertheless, characteristic of the meeting that the distinctions suggested by the terms “younger” and “older” churches or “nationals” and “missionaries” were felt to be more than ever subordinate to our common calling in the Church and our common missionary obligation.’<sup>123</sup> While at the Whitby meeting of 1947 it seems that no definitive plans were put forward for a subsequent meeting, there were a number of factors which made another gathering necessary. First, the world continued to be a

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<sup>118</sup> L.B. Greaves, ‘The All Africa Church Conference’ *International Review of Missions* 47 (1958), p. 258.

<sup>119</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 247.

<sup>120</sup> Greaves, ‘The All Africa Church Conference’, p. 261.

<sup>121</sup> Utuk, *From New York to Ibadan*, p. 247.

<sup>122</sup> Weber, ‘Out of All Continents and Nations’, p. 77.

<sup>123</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1953), p. iii.

revolutionary place, especially in the realm of politics and decolonization. As Newbigin states, 'the changes in the world were so revolutionary as to raise the question whether missions in the traditional sense were not already a thing of the past.'<sup>124</sup>

Second, and most important, many of the churches were struggling to live out what Whitby had envisioned as 'partners in obedience': 'There were mission boards already examining their own policies fundamentally; there were younger church leaders and their missionary partners deeply exercised about this whole issue and there was much being said and written in various quarters that was relevant to it.'<sup>125</sup> As the official report of the conference states, the theme of the meeting was 'The Missionary Obligation of the Church' because it was believed that 'the time is ripe for a fresh formulation of the missionary mandate and for the revision of traditional missionary policies.'<sup>126</sup> It is important to note, however, that Willingen was seen not as a conference to find answers and solve every problem to these issues, but 'as a time for corporate reflection and discussion on this two-fold task of theological enquiry and policy re-formulation.'<sup>127</sup>

In the attempt to formulate anew the church's theological mandate for mission, Willingen broke new ground and would have a lasting impact on the discussions at later conferences. From the time of the Jerusalem conference in 1928, the understanding of mission had been 'church-centric'; that is, focus should move away from 'the "mission" where it is an administrative agency so that the indigenous church will become the centre from which the whole missionary enterprise of the area will be directed.'<sup>128</sup> But much had changed during the past quarter-century, and 'there was felt to be an urgent need for a "theology of missions"'. The very foundations of the whole missionary movement were in need of re-examination....<sup>129</sup> What Willingen attempted to do was to reformulate the missionary mandate, not from the perspective of the church and church extension, but from an international

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<sup>124</sup> Newbigin, 'Mission in Six Continents', p. 178.

<sup>125</sup> Norman Goodall, 'Willingen – Milestone, Not Terminus' in Norman Goodall (ed.) *Missions Under the Cross* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1953), p. 12.

<sup>126</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. iii.

<sup>127</sup> Goodall, 'Willingen – Milestone, Not Terminus', p. 13.

<sup>128</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between Older and Younger Churches*, p. 209.

<sup>129</sup> Newbigin, 'Mission to Six Continents', p. 178.



perspective. The conference stated that '[there] is no participation in Christ without participation in His mission to the world.'<sup>130</sup> To this end, Willingen stated that

the Church is required to identify itself with the world, not only in its perplexity and distress, its guilt and its sorrow, but also in its real acts of love and justice – acts by which it often puts the churches to shame. The churches must confess that they have often passed by on the other side while the unbeliever, moved by compassion, did what the churches ought to have done. Wherever a church denies its solidarity with the world, or divorces its deeds from its words, it destroys the possibility of communicating the Gospel and presents to the world an offence which is not the genuine offence of the Cross.<sup>131</sup>

This refocusing of mission away from the church and onto (as well as into) the whole of creation was a major theological change and, according to Bosch, '[it] was here that the idea (not the exact term) *missio Dei* first surfaced.'<sup>132</sup> Bosch goes on to explain that 'Willingen's image of mission was mission as participating in the sending of God. Our mission has no life of its own: only in the hands of the sending God can it truly be called mission, not least since the missionary initiative comes from God alone.'<sup>133</sup> Bevans and Schroeder state that because of this, 'mission is not a task that is one among several in which the church should be engaged; mission, rather, belongs to the very purpose, life, and structure of the church...'<sup>134</sup> This change in perspective at Willingen was significant because the theme and understanding of mission as the *missio Dei* would continue to grow and greatly influence subsequent meetings of both the IMC and the WCC.<sup>135</sup>

In the area of reforming policy, Beattie states that '[the] main practical issue at Willingen was how to keep the missionary movement moving; how to ensure mobility for further advance, how to come to grips with new opportunities and to adapt the work to changing needs.'<sup>136</sup> In seeking to find answers to these challenges, members of the Global and World churches, as at Whitby, met separately, and for each group the same questions were asked: 'How can the Church recover its missionary initiative and achieve greater mobility? Are missionary societies and younger churches ready

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<sup>130</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 3.

<sup>131</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 5.

<sup>132</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 390.

<sup>133</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 390.

<sup>134</sup> Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, p. 290.

<sup>135</sup> For more information on the significance, development, and consequences of *missio Dei*, cf., Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, pp. 286-304; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, pp. 389-393; and Tom Stransky, 'Missio Dei' in Nicholas Lossky, et al. (eds.) *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2002), pp. 280-281.

<sup>136</sup> John Beattie, 'Willingen 1952' *International Review of Missions* 41 (1952), pp. 437-438.

now to face the radical changes in traditional policies and the sacrifice which such a new initiative demands?’<sup>137</sup>

The report from the World churches stated that for the church to recover its mobility and initiative, ‘every Christian in the younger churches should be a witnessing Christian. ... We believe that responsibility for the initiative should rest on the baptized community of Christians in every area.’<sup>138</sup> On the issue of Global/World partnership, the World churches said that they were ‘convinced that missionary work should be done through the Church. We should cease to speak of “missions and churches” and avoid this dichotomy not only in our thinking but also in our actions. We should now speak about the mission of the Church.’<sup>139</sup> Finally, with regard to unity it was stated that ‘[in] the lands of the younger churches divided witness is a crippling handicap. We of the younger churches feel this very keenly. While unity may be desirable in the lands of the older churches, it is *imperative* in those of the younger churches.’<sup>140</sup>

In their report, the Global churches noted that ‘[the] Church, it was generally agreed, had not lost its initiative. The question should really perhaps have read “How can we reinforce the initiative and how can we increase mobility?” To that question there is no simple and clear-cut answer.... Yet we would be blind if we did not sense and know that there was need of a real change in the missionary enterprise today.’<sup>141</sup> Unfortunately, the changes offered were in no way new, but simply a restating of the findings of earlier conferences. The report of the Global churches did note that, while partnership was imperative, it had many times hindered the initiative of churches to engage in mission: ‘Again and again initiative has been cramped and frustrated by inadequate partnership between the sending church and the church overseas.’<sup>142</sup> Again, however, no new suggestions were offered as to how these inadequate partnerships could be made to work more effectively.<sup>143</sup> Lastly, the Global churches

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<sup>137</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 39.

<sup>138</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 40.

<sup>139</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 40.

<sup>140</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 40.

<sup>141</sup> W.D.L. Greer, ‘A Discussion by Delegates from the Older Churches’ in Norman Goodall (ed.) *Missions Under the Cross* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1953), p. 236.

<sup>142</sup> Greer, ‘The Discussion by Delegates from the Older Churches’, p. 237.

<sup>143</sup> What was offered was a resolution suggesting further study: ‘There is growing confidence between older and younger churches in sharing responsibilities for deciding policies and controlling work. At the same time we confront situations where this divide of authority results not in partnership in decision but in paralysis of decision.... In order that such partnership may increase we recommend that the International Missionary Council study: (a) significant examples of joint responsibility and

also agreed with the need for unity, stating that ‘even partnership is not enough. There must be a move towards unity, towards oneness. We must not ask or expect of the younger churches ... what we would not ask or expect from the sending churches. We must no longer advise them, “Do as we say, not as we do”. In reality there are no younger churches or older churches. There is only one Church....’<sup>144</sup>

Although it is evident from both reports that there were no radical or ground breaking findings in either report, these discussions were to prove important in the ongoing partnership dialogue. According to Newbigin, ‘[no] very clear directives emerged from these discussions; but the conviction was registered that new patterns of partnership were needed if mobility was to be recovered. This conviction was to bear fruit later in the concept of “Joint Action for Mission”.’<sup>145</sup>

Another area of policy discussed was the role of the mission society and the missionary. The statement at Whitby about the continued need of support from the Global to the World churches was still acknowledged, however with a caution: ‘[It] must be recognized that such support tends to keep churches from developing in their own way, and often implants and maintains alien and expensive structures of church work.’<sup>146</sup> Despite this warning, no ideas on how to correct this reality were offered. As at past conferences, it was agreed that missionaries were still desired and needed by the World churches; however, one can see from the statement of the conference on this issue that there was not much clarity on how the missionary should function in the new and revolutionary world situation. The conference stated that

[in] this day a fresh answer is particularly urgent because the familiar features of the world in which the foreign missionary movement grew up have largely disappeared. At the same time by God’s grace the Church which God calls to serve Him has grown to be a community now planted in almost every nation on earth. We need to listen anew to God’s call in the present situation and in the new fact of the world-wide Church.<sup>147</sup>

One aspect that was new to the call for missionaries was the mention, for the first time, of short term assignments. While the need for career missionaries was still supported, the report noted that ‘the missionary obligation must also be carried out

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decision, indicating possible further development; and (b) patterns of the merging of missions into churches in various fields and traditions, pointing out those which have most satisfactorily devolved full responsibility on the younger church.’ *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 30.

<sup>144</sup> Greer, ‘The Discussion by Delegates from the Older Churches’, p. 237.

<sup>145</sup> Newbigin, ‘Mission To Six Continents’, p. 180. The program for ‘Joint Action for Mission’ was a product of the WCC Assembly at New Delhi in 1961(see below, p. 269).

<sup>146</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 15.

<sup>147</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 19.

through a far wider and more frequent exchange for brief periods of men and women who have gained experience in reaching untouched masses (e.g. in industrial life), or who have specialized gifts in particular forms of Christian ministry.<sup>148</sup> In addition to short term assignments, it was also suggested that ‘perhaps a new type of missionary must be recruited who would be ready to be more mobile, and available for service in movement rather than in a settled place.’<sup>149</sup> These types of missionary work would become increasingly important, especially as the concept of the church’s role in *development* expanded.

Having looked at Willingen’s main findings in regarding to redefining the mandate for mission as well as the policies of boards and churches, the report also touches on two other areas important for the study of partnership. First, Willingen was the first meeting of the IMC following Truman’s defining of underdevelopment in his inaugural address, and thus is the first meeting that dealt specifically with the issue of *development* and underdevelopment. In the section on ‘Technical Assistance and Welfare Services’, the report states that ‘[since] 1948 new programmes of technical assistance for under-developed countries have been undertaken by the British Commonwealth, the United States, and the United Nations. Churches and missions have increasingly concerned themselves with such programmes in the light of the Christian faith.’<sup>150</sup> In the light of the new and growing interest in development, the report ‘urges *churches and missions* to welcome the new governmental programmes of technical assistance and to co-operate where possible in the interest of the welfare of the people.’<sup>151</sup> Part of this task, for both missionaries and leaders of the World churches, was to ‘[encourage] among the peoples of under-developed countries a genuine desire for self-development.’<sup>152</sup> While missionaries were warned to ‘recognize the fundamental rights and the cultural heritage of the peoples served’ and to ‘guard against any appearance of being identified with wealth and power, [seeking] always to promote the social and economic welfare of the general population,’<sup>153</sup> the Willingen report fully supported the Western pattern and goals of development.

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<sup>148</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 22.

<sup>149</sup> Cecil Northcott, *The Christian World Mission* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1953), p. 18.

<sup>150</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 35.

<sup>151</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 36.

<sup>152</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 36.

<sup>153</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, pp. 35-36.

Second, the report showed that, despite resolutions at Whitby (and before) on the need to educate and reinterpret missions to the *home base*, little had been done on this front. Goodall states that those at Willingen realized that

the twentieth-century mission of the Church is mainly being supported by people who still think in nineteenth-century terms. These bring zeal, devotion and sacrifice to a cause whose principles and methods of working have changed beyond anything realized by the supporters themselves.... It may be a little paradoxical that a Willingen meeting which was much concerned about the achievement of greater mobility and the taking of stronger initiatives in the historic 'mission field' of the Church, should also indicate that one of the large unfinished tasks lies at the 'home base'.<sup>154</sup>

While this statement is reminiscent of the findings at Madras and Whitby, the delegates at Willingen also realized that, with the birth of the World Council of Churches, another aspect needed to be added to mission education; namely, the fact that mission was now taking place in an ecumenical world. The report noted that '[interpretation] involves an effort on the part of the organized missionary movement and churches to see themselves as sharers in, and contributors to, the developing ecumenical life.... There is a heavy time-lag in this field. Ecumenical growth outstrikes missionary education and interpretation.'<sup>155</sup> It was admitted that since even some leaders of the missions and World churches were slow in understanding this new ecumenical setting, it was understandable that it was grasped by even 'fewer supporters of the missionary agencies.'<sup>156</sup> At past conferences, teams of delegates were asked to go to local congregations in their areas to share information about the various conference findings. While this method of education had admittedly not proven effective, delegates at Willingen continued to pursue much the same path, simply stating that every opportunity 'should be taken by those present at Willingen to communicate the story of the conference to local parishes and congregations.'<sup>157</sup>

The ecumenical church, as well as the secular world in which it existed, continued to undergo revolutionary change and, according to Northcott, '[to] understand this change in the style and character of "missions" requires an effort of imagination and faith on the part of the traditional supporters of missions in the Western countries, and no less a readiness on the part of the missionary agencies

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<sup>154</sup> Goodall, 'Willingen – Milestone, Not Terminus', p. 19.

<sup>155</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 42.

<sup>156</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 42.

<sup>157</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 42.

themselves to adapt their policies ... to the new day.’<sup>158</sup> Despite the knowledge of the changed situation, however, missionary leaders would continue to struggle to change the perceptions of the *home base*.

In conclusion, delegates at Willingen realized that ‘[the] creative insights of previous conferences from Jerusalem to Whitby have gradually made their way into the thought of churches and missions but have not always resulted in the kind of action that those conferences hoped for.’<sup>159</sup> At the close of the conference, there were high hopes that Willingen would be different. Delegates were told that interpreting and acting on the findings ‘calls for our rising above many past conventional procedures and patterns to experiences of new commitment, bold adventure and disciplined co-operation, with calculated risks and, above all, trustful prayer. We must so dare speak and act that we may meet bravely and adequately both the challenge of the times and the demands of the urgent and unprecedented world-wide Christian opportunity.’<sup>160</sup>

As with past conferences, not much changed, so if Willingen is to be judged by these hopes being met, one must admit that the conference failed on many counts. However, Newbigin states that, in a number of ways, it was instead ‘one of the most significant in the series of world missionary conferences.’<sup>161</sup> Willingen broke new ground in its reformulation of the theological basis for mission which became known as the *missio Dei*, a concept that would become the primary mission motif over the next several decades. And, although there were no real new ideas concerning mission policy, Willingen served to continue the very important partnership discussion between Global and World churches. As Goodall states, ‘[the] fact is that Willingen proved to be – perhaps more searchingly than some had anticipated – not the end of an enquiry, but a step in a process which still demands more costly obedience as well as deeper thought.’<sup>162</sup>

### 7.7 Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches – Evanston (1954)

The next assembly of the WCC took place in August 1954 in Evanston, Illinois, with the theme ‘Christ – The Hope of the World’. The assembly was

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<sup>158</sup> Northcott, *Christian World Mission*, p. 25.

<sup>159</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 42.

<sup>160</sup> *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, p. 46.

<sup>161</sup> Newbigin, ‘Mission to Six Continents’, p. 178.

<sup>162</sup> Goodall, ‘Willingen – Milestone, Not Terminus’, p. 14.

attended by 502 delegates representing 161 member churches. In the run-up to the assembly, Devanandan wrote that

[some] of us from the so-called Younger Churches left Amsterdam with a heavy heart, because we could not help feeling that somehow we did not belong. The entire trend of discussion veered round problems of life and thought which primarily concerned the Older Churches. Moreover, we gained the impression ... that we were being made to think and act in accordance with the ideas, doctrinal and political, which are current in the Older Churches. I think we should be spared a repetition of this experience at the next Assembly.<sup>163</sup>

Although the Global churches did not dominate discussions to the same extent they had at Amsterdam, this second meeting of the WCC was still primarily focused on a Global church agenda. While Krüger states that the World churches 'were much more strongly represented than at Amsterdam',<sup>164</sup> Goodall writes that '[the] delegation from Africa and from some parts of Asia was all too small, but India was very much in evidence....'<sup>165</sup> Ranson, in a statement reminiscent of comments made after the first assembly, says that unfortunately '[the] western world with its needs and preoccupations, is still regarded as the world which really matters. The rest provides a colourful geographical fringe. We have hardly begun to understand what it means to belong to a Church which is worldwide.'<sup>166</sup> While membership of the council had grown since the first assembly and more World churches were represented, the agenda, like at Amsterdam, was set by and reflected the concerns of Global Christianity.

When looking at issues around partnership, Newbigin says that Evanston 'did not ... produce any explicit new thinking on missionary questions.'<sup>167</sup> However, while no specific issues regarding mission societies, the role of missionaries, or financial dependence were discussed, Evanston is important for a number of reasons. First, the WCC had grown and in its official Message, the assembly states that '[six] years ago our churches entered into a covenant to form this Council, and affirmed their intention to stay together.... We enter now upon a second stage. To stay together is not

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<sup>163</sup> P.D. Devanandan, 'Comments on the First Report of the Advisory Commission on the Theme of the Second Assembly' *Ecumenical Review* 4 (January 1952), p. 163.

<sup>164</sup> H. Krüger, 'The Life and Activities of the World Council of Churches' in Harold C. Fey (ed.) *A History of the Ecumenical Movement* Vol. 2 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), p. 40.

<sup>165</sup> Norman Goodall, 'Evanston and the World Mission of the Church' *International Review of Missions* 44 (1955), p. 86.

<sup>166</sup> C.W. Ranson, 'Plenary Address, WCC Evanston' *Christian Century* 22 (1954), p. 133.

<sup>167</sup> Newbigin, 'Mission to Six Continents', p. 181.

enough. We must go forward.’<sup>168</sup> As Krüger notes, ‘[at] Amsterdam the Churches had announced their intention to “stay together”. At Evanston they expressed their desire “to grow together”....’<sup>169</sup> For delegates at the assembly, an important aspect of this ‘growing together’ was the relationship of ‘association’ between the WCC and the IMC and whether this was still adequate. As the two organizations worked more and more closely together, there were some who believed that they should unite as one body. The joint committee of the IMC and WCC had been discussing this issue for some time and, before the assembly, issued a statement noting that ‘while welcoming the deepening conviction in many quarters that the two bodies belong together in one calling and purpose ... it has not yet become clear whether this association should necessarily lead to a single organization or whether it can best be furthered by the joint action of two autonomous but inter-dependent councils.’<sup>170</sup> While the WCC and the IMC *Ad Interim* Committee both accepted this, the discussions concerning integration would continue as the two bodies worked jointly on many issues. Although neither was ready for integration, the growing relationship between the WCC and IMC was evident at Evanston and was to continue to be important in efforts at partnership.

The second reason for the importance of Evanston was the decision to expand the work of the Department of Inter-Church Aid and Services to Refugees (DICASR). At its inception, DICASR was concerned solely with the rebuilding of Europe following World War II. Mackie notes that this mandate slowly expanded, so that ‘[by] 1951 it was concerned with the Near East through the Beirut Conference on Palestine Refugees, which was arranged jointly with the IMC. Soon it was in Hong Kong in the interests of the thousands of European refugees left in China.’<sup>171</sup> The Evanston Assembly, looking at the revolutionary world situation and influenced by the growth of the idea of *development* and underdevelopment, continued to search for the churches’ role in responding to these issues. In the section entitled ‘The Problems in the Economically Underdeveloped Regions’, it was noted that

[society] in Asia, Africa, and some parts of Latin America today is characterized by the urge to national self-determination in political and

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<sup>168</sup> *The Evanston Report: The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches 1954* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), p. 2; hereafter cited as *The Evanston Report*.

<sup>169</sup> Krüger, ‘The Life and Activities of the World Council of Churches’, p. 39.

<sup>170</sup> Goodall, ‘Evanston and the World Mission of the Church’, p. 90.

<sup>171</sup> Robert C. Mackie, ‘The Responsibility of the Churches in the World Council Towards the Needs of the Churches and of the Peoples of Asia and Africa’ *Ecumenical Review* 8 (October 1955), p. 14.



economic matters.... The peoples of these countries have awakened to a new sense of fundamental human rights and justice and they are in revolt against enslaving political, economic, religious, and social conditions. There is also the pressure to achieve changes rapidly. All of the processes of social development – increasing productivity, raising standards of living, democratization, and the rest – which have taken centuries in the West, demand in these areas to be completed together and within decades.<sup>172</sup>

While it was understood that much good work was being done by government agencies and the United Nations on this front, it was also acknowledged that ‘there are other elements in this government interest, elements of natural self-interest. The desire to influence other nations is strong, whether for commercial or political reasons. Behind all this aid stands the shadow of the balance of power.’<sup>173</sup> Instead of giving aid and technical assistance for one’s own interest, it was believed that churches, acting through the WCC, could Christianize the *development* process: ‘We have a fellowship represented ... in which there are no “older” and “younger” churches, in which there can be no hint of patronage due to size or history.... And in our World Council there has grown up a will to bear one another’s burdens. That is a new factor in Christian history.’<sup>174</sup> As a result of these observations, the geographical boundaries were lifted and ‘[the] Division of Inter-Church Aid now felt itself called to enter with massive programmes of aid into the areas in which the missionary societies had long been at work.’

It is important to note that, when it came to expanding the role of DICARS, Evanston simply served to start the process. In 1956, at a meeting in Herrenalb, the joint committee of the IMC and WCC issued a list of categories or criteria which served to govern the agency’s work. Under this agreement,

Projects from Asia, Africa, and Latin America ... were confined to the following categories:

- i) Needs arising from situations which are strictly of an emergency character by natural disasters, economic crisis, political and social upheavals, and the like.
- ii) The needs of refugees and homeless people.
- iii) The needs of churches not in regular relation with any missionary society and therefore not normally receiving help from this source.
- iv) Urgent inter-church and ecumenical projects, whether designed for the strengthening of the churches or the service of the community, insofar as these cannot be supported adequately either from the local sources or through mission boards.

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<sup>172</sup> *The Evanston Report*, pp. 59-60.

<sup>173</sup> Mackie, ‘The Responsibility of the Churches’, p. 11.

<sup>174</sup> Mackie, ‘The Responsibility of the Churches’, p. 12.

- v) Social service or relief projects clearly demanded by the local situation....
- vi) Experiments aimed at ensuring the self-support of the Church or Christian community....<sup>175</sup>

As the program for Inter-Church Aid was expanded, it did cause confusion and conflict between the WCC, mission societies, and World churches. As Newbigin explains, the mission societies 'had been for many decades seeking to lead the Churches to financial self-support and had therefore been reducing the level of aid for on-going work. There was anxiety lest the coming in of large new resources from organizations which were interested in service rather than in mission might both hinder the development of self-support and also deflect the younger Churches from their missionary task.'<sup>176</sup> Those seeking to expand the work of Inter-Church Aid, however, were aware of these issues and, as they left Evanston, they knew their task would be difficult: 'We are trying to work out again the nature of the service of Christians to one another and to their fellow men. We are building a path amidst many pitfalls.... That is the task of the Division of Inter-Church Aid....'<sup>177</sup>

When judging the impact of Evanston on partnership, it is clear the results were mixed. Although the WCC and IMC were not ready to integrate, it served as a step in that process. The expansion of the mandate for Inter-Church Aid was to affect the churches' role in *development*, as well as the relationships between the churches that sent and received funds. In all of these, it is clear that delegates struggled to find answers in the revolutionary world in which they found themselves. Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary General of the United Nations, addressed the assembly on the issue of decolonization and development, saying that

our time is characterized by two predominant trends. One towards social and economic equality within nations, the other towards equal rights and opportunities for all nations. But if there are no means provided for orderly development these trends may lead to cataclysms like those of the recent past. We must approach our task from two angles. First of all by practical action to help underdeveloped countries economically and to provide a framework for peaceful development of the independence and self-determination of nations. Secondly, there is need for inspiration, for the creation of a spirit among the

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<sup>175</sup> *New Delhi to Uppsala: 1961-1968* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1968), pp. 116-117. Later, at a meeting of the WCC's Executive Committee in 1964, the 'Herrenalb categories', seen as being too restrictive, would be dropped as DICASR would expand further into the project of *development*.

<sup>176</sup> Newbigin, 'Mission to Six Continents', p. 182.

<sup>177</sup> Mackie, 'The Responsibilities of the Churches', p. 13.

leaders of the peoples which helps them to use the forces which they have to master, for peace and not for war, for evolution and not for revolution.<sup>178</sup>

Delegates made a series of resolutions about how the nations of the world should respond to these obligations with a familiar term: partnership. In Evanston's official report, it is noted that '[in] the new context of our age relations between peoples hitherto "subject" and "ruling" should be one of partnership and co-operation.'<sup>179</sup> However, much like the call for partnership between Global and World churches, this call was fraught with contradictions. Through the expansion of Inter-Church Aid, '[the] way was ... opened up for a massive contribution from wealthier Churches through channels other than the traditional missionary channels.'<sup>180</sup> Through the partnership of nations, the developed were to help the underdeveloped to catch up, though countries were admonished, probably rather naively, that 'for this partnership to be fruitful there is required in nations "young" and "old" a readiness always to learn from one another.'<sup>181</sup> Although delegates at Evanston acknowledged that these calls for partnership were not without problems, no real solutions were given as to how to live these relationships out, in either the ecclesiastic or secular world. Despite the beautifully worded *rhetoric*, one can see present in the discussions two very different and contested understandings of partnership. What delegates were in essence calling for was partnership between unequals, making genuine mutuality and sharing difficult to achieve.

#### 7.8 The Accra Meeting of the International Missionary Council (1958)

The next meeting of the IMC took place from December 1957 through to early January 1958 in the newly independent African nation of Ghana. At the opening, delegates were welcomed by the Prime Minister, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. Although he gave a warm welcome to the assembly, he also gave a stark picture of the relationship developing between the North and South:

You see Africa. You see the ambitions and hopes of millions of Africans who, so far, have had the crumbs of civilization falling from the rich tables of the western world. Africans today are only at the beginning of their adventure. They need education. They need advancement. They need capital without

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<sup>178</sup> *The Evanston Report*, p. 40.

<sup>179</sup> *Evanston Speaks: Reports from the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (London: SCM Press, 1954, p. 74.

<sup>180</sup> Newbiggin, 'Mission to Six Continents', p. 183.

<sup>181</sup> *Evanston Speaks*, p. 75.

which no progress to the higher opportunities of life is possible. Yet what do we Africans see when we look abroad? We see vast wealthy nations pouring out their treasure on sterile arms. We see powerful peoples engaged in a futile and destructive armaments race. We see the precious capital that might help raise up Africa and Asia flung away to potential destruction. What has this to do with the Christian charity proclaimed by the west? Or the human brotherhood we hear so much about from the east? Seen from the angle of Africa's needs and hopes, the Great Powers' rivalry looks like one thing only – a senseless, fratricidal struggle to destroy the very substance of humanity.<sup>182</sup>

Nkrumah went on to say that the unity represented by such a large gathering of Christians from so many countries and cultures were 'symbols of the whole world's profoundest need.'<sup>183</sup> It was into this setting that, according to Sinclair, 'some two hundred people – delegates of member councils of the IMC, observers from non-member councils and consultants – came together to discuss "the Christian mission at this hour."'<sup>184</sup> Meeting at a time when many nations were looking to follow Ghana's lead and gain independence, the Accra meeting discussed issues around partnership, Global church mission, and the role of missionaries with an honesty and openness not seen in early gatherings.

First, delegates at Accra looked back at Whitby's theme of 'Partners in Obedience' to see how far the ecumenical church had progressed. In some aspects it seemed that things had, in fact, moved in the right direction. It was reported that

[allowing] for differences in local situations and stages of development in various areas, devolution is a fact in many lands. Admittedly the pace has been slow in some countries, but in the main there has been a genuine transfer of focus and responsibility from missionary organization to younger Church.... Transfer of property titles has also been common. No longer need the suspicion of missionary alliance with imperialism rest upon the Church.... In some portions of the older Churches there has been an intensification of missionary interest, and younger Churches themselves have given evidence of becoming "sending" bodies. The flow of traffic on the missionary road is in many directions.<sup>185</sup>

It was also pointed out, however, that Whitby's emphasis on partnership focused not simply on structural or functional changes, but on obedience in following God and

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<sup>182</sup> Kwame Nkrumah, 'A Speech by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Prime Minister of Ghana' in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *The Ghana Assembly of the International Missionary Council* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1958), p. 150; hereafter cited as *The Ghana Assembly*.

<sup>183</sup> Nkrumah, 'A Speech by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Prime Minister of Ghana', p. 150.

<sup>184</sup> Margaret Sinclair, 'The Christian Mission at this Hour: The Ghana Assembly of the IMC' *International Review of Missions* 47 (1958), p. 137.

<sup>185</sup> James K. Matthews, 'What Does "Partnership in Obedience" Mean?' in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *The Ghana Assembly of the International Missionary Council* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1958), p. 35.

God's mission, and in this aspect progress was disappointing. As Matthews asked, 'Would it not be fair to say that emphasis has been more on modes of partnership than upon the meaning of Christian obedience?'<sup>186</sup> Nielsen also points out that since the emphasis had been structural, the question could legitimately be asked: What had changed? He notes that "[partnership] in obedience", the one mission of the one Church, all this does not first and foremost mean organizational arrangements; internationalization is not necessarily the same as partnership. ...[It] is perfectly possible to construct new organizational buildings which are really just new embodiments of precisely the same thinking which produced the old.'<sup>187</sup> Because of this, disappointment was felt by both members of the Global and World churches, with the latter being frustration on two fronts:

A part of the trouble is verbal. Almost before they became commonly used about 1928 the inadequacy of terms, "younger" and "older" churches was sensed. Their use at all seemed almost a denial of the universality of the Church; and their continued use, a mark of unrealized partnership.... But the tension is not just verbal. It has economic aspects too. A sense of dependency seems to deny achievement of independent status by younger Churches. Furthermore, many younger churchmen feel thwarted by not being given tasks commensurate with their abilities and training or, on the other hand, are frustrated by appointments to responsibilities for which they have had inadequate training.<sup>188</sup>

For the older churches, 'they cannot disassociate themselves from their heritage both of missionary achievements and shortcomings in the past. One of their problems nowadays is how to be helpful to younger Churches without hindering.'<sup>189</sup> In looking at these issues, Matthews, after stating that all churches needed to realize their dependence on God and on one another, asked some searching questions: 'Can the younger Church accept the older Church with all its pride, its shortcomings, its heritage, its guilt by association? Can the older Church accept the younger Church in spite of its smallness, its weakness, its spirit of independence? ...Is it not a fact that

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<sup>186</sup> Matthews, 'What Does "Partnership in Obedience" Mean?', p. 35.

<sup>187</sup> Erik W. Nielsen, 'The Rôle of the IMC' in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *The Ghana Assembly of the International Missionary Council* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1958), p. 211.

<sup>188</sup> Matthews, 'What Does "Partnership in Obedience" Mean?', p. 36. Hubble notes that, in regards to the use of language, '[there] was clearly in the groups a desire that we determine here at this Assembly to accept this fact of the one Church sent to the world in obedience to Christ, and prove our acceptance in our thinking and speech by refusing to use the terms "sending and receiving" countries, "older and younger Churches", and to school ourselves to accept the thought of the one mission of Christ's church.' Gwenyth Hubble, 'Report on Group Discussions' in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *The Ghana Assembly of the International Missionary Council* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1958), p. 172.

<sup>189</sup> Matthews, 'What Does "Partnership in Obedience" Mean?', p. 37.

we do not fully accept ourselves nor our brothers and so partnership in the Gospel is inadequately realized? This is partnership in obedience!’<sup>190</sup> While it was evident that all of the churches involved shared some blame for the inadequacies of the relationships, Nielsen had especially strong words for the churches of Global Christianity, stating that ‘[one] essential requirement of partnership is that the partner must be a true partner, must be himself and as such give of the grace and forgiveness he has received. Is the partner from Asia and Africa *really* heard? ...[The] churches in Asia and Africa must be taken much more seriously; partnership means listening to the partner, to what God is saying through him to His Church.’<sup>191</sup>

Lastly, he noted that while many in the ecumenical movement continued to speak about the need to make the agenda of conferences for balanced, this needed to be more than simply *rhetoric*: ‘There is as yet not nearly enough real Asian and African participation in our thinking and work in the ecumenical movement. The last few years have seen a rapid increase in this, but we must continue, and it is not done just by putting a few Asians or Africans on a committee where the thought categories, the whole tenor and rhythm of conversation, is western....’<sup>192</sup> When looking back at the discussions that took place one notes that the emphasis at Accra was not on finding solutions to these problems, but in the asking of the questions and contestation of continued paternalism. While earlier conferences had focused on the modes of relating, Accra asked questions concerning the very essence of the relationships.

Another issue discussed was how the growth of the World churches affected the understanding of mission for the churches of Global Christianity. When looking back at the Jerusalem meeting of 1928, it was easy to see the changes: ‘Then missions had problems, but they were not a problem themselves. There was no question that the initiative in witness and action was with Western missions as they stood. To-day we do not speak of the initiative of Western missions but only of their contribution. ...We are uncertain about their patterns as they are and even more, the historic, basic conceptions of missions are being questioned.’<sup>193</sup> It was also acknowledged that this questioning was not only due to the growth and maturity of the World churches, but also to the growth of ecumenical, international Christianity as well, noting that there

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<sup>190</sup> Matthews, ‘What Does “Partnership in Obedience” Mean?’, p. 39.

<sup>191</sup> Nielsen, ‘The Rôle of the IMC’, pp. 212-213.

<sup>192</sup> Nielsen, ‘The Rôle of the IMC’, p. 213.

<sup>193</sup> Walter Freytag, ‘Changes in the Patterns of Western Missions’ in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *The Ghana Assembly of the International Missionary Council* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1958), pp. 138-139.

were arising 'new forms of togetherness of Christians: in the World Council of Churches, the confessional world bodies, the growing Christian world agencies with special tasks, none of which can be world organizations without reaching out into all the world and without making their constituencies conscious of their being a part of a world-wide fellowship and awakening their responsibility for it.'<sup>194</sup>

Finally, Accra asked questions about the role and continued need for missionaries. Taylor states that

[the] discussion of this subject is going to touch a number of people on a sore point. There will be representatives of Churches which, even within the bonds of Christian love, chafe at the subtle, unconscious persistence of missionary paternalism, or find the foreign worker an embarrassment in the context of nationalism. There will also be missionaries who nurse secret wounds or worries caused by the changed relationships of these times, or are strained by what seems to them a waste or abuse of their service by the autonomous Church which controls them. There will be representatives of mission boards who are torn between the demands of a changed situation and the unchanging attitudes of their "supporters".<sup>195</sup>

Taylor looked back at the history of the modern Protestant missionary movement and noted that while many early missionary statesmen talked about missionaries moving on after the 'euthanasia' of the mission, the fact was that 'very few missionary bodies have ever voluntarily and deliberately withdrawn; there has always seemed good reason for staying.'<sup>196</sup> In reporting on the content of the discussions, Hubble states that '[in] no group was there apparently any suggestion that members felt that foreign missionaries had *no* place or function in their parts of the Church'; however, 'it was recognized that to-day the power is not in the missionary's hands, and in the type of missionary who wishes to dominate that fact may lead to frustration....'<sup>197</sup>

One issue that gained attention was the issue of missionary salaries, and it was urged that 'there be honest reconsideration of the problem of the differences in standards of living not only as between the missionary and his national colleague, but also between American missionaries and others.'<sup>198</sup> Hubble writes that at the end of the discussions, suggestions were made to missionaries, to mission boards, and to the churches receiving personnel:

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<sup>194</sup> Freytag, 'Changes in the Patterns of Western Missions', p. 140.

<sup>195</sup> J.V. Taylor, 'The Place and Function of the Missionary' in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *The Ghana Assembly of the International Missionary Council* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1958), p. 28.

<sup>196</sup> Taylor, 'The Place and Function of the Missionary', p. 30.

<sup>197</sup> Hubble, 'Report on Group Discussions', p. 177.

<sup>198</sup> Hubble, 'Report on Group Discussions', p. 178.

To the missionary it says that he will be welcomed if he does not wish to dominate, if he is able to be truly Christian in his relationship even if he is not given so much opportunity for activism as his predecessors. ...To the mission boards it says: choose people who can fit into this kind of situation and be ready to find people with special qualifications when they are asked for, and then prepare and train them for the situation to which they go and for being the kind of people they need to be. Of Churches who receive missionaries it asks that they be ready to undertake the continued training of the new missionary, teaching him well the language and the thought forms, initiating him into the life of the people to whom he has come ... and seeking with him to find where and how he can best serve the Church.<sup>199</sup>

While much of this was not new, Accra restated it in the light of the discussions on partnership, as well as the place and role of Global church mission, all of which was reinterpreted through the understanding of mission as the *missio Dei*. As Bosch states, through the discussions at Accra, the ecumenical understanding of mission was changing: 'The church-*for*-others was slowly turning into the church-*with*-others; pro-existence was changing into coexistence. Mission could no longer be viewed as one-way traffic, from West to the Third World; every church, everywhere, was understood to be in a state of mission.'<sup>200</sup>

Before moving on from Accra, one of the most important decisions made at the assembly must be discussed: the approval of the plan of integration of the IMC with the WCC. At the WCC Assembly in Evanston (1954), members had decided that despite the growth of the WCC there was no need for integration at that point and the relationship of 'association' should continue. However, in 1956, the joint committee of the WCC and IMC recommended that 'the time had come to consider afresh the possibility of an integration of the two Councils and asked for authority "to undertake the formulation – in the fullest possible consultation with all concerned – of a draft Plan of Integration for presentation to the WCC Central Committee in 1957 and to the IMC Assembly at the Gold Coast in December-January, 1957/58".'<sup>201</sup> One of the reasons for this change was the fact that, with the growth of the WCC, the IMC's role in the new ecumenical setting was becoming less and less clear. Nielsen states that in this new context, '[the] very setting and context for the existence of the IMC was rapidly changing. The World Council of Churches had been established ...

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<sup>199</sup> Hubble, 'Report on Group Discussions' pp. 178-179.

<sup>200</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 379.

<sup>201</sup> Ernest A. Payne and David G. Moses, *Why Integration? An explanation of the proposal before the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council* (London: Wm. Carling & Company, 1957), p. 19.



and a number of concerns which had previously taken a prominent place in normal IMC activities were now handled in conjunction with the WCC or more or less completely taken over by the WCC.<sup>202</sup> Nissen points out that this growth in ‘association’ was directly tied to the growth of the World churches: ‘The underlying reason for this growing concrete cooperation was the more and more evident “churchification” of the IMC. The number and influence of the younger churches increased during the fifties, and this in fact changed the conciliar structure of the IMC.’<sup>203</sup> At the 1957 meeting of the WCC Central Committee, the draft plan was accepted in principle and sent to each member church for approval. It now came before the IMC Assembly.

It is evident from the discussions that there was sharp disagreement on the merits of integration.<sup>204</sup> According to Nielsen, however, regardless of where one stood on this argument, an issue that every member had to face was the question around the place and function of the IMC in the new ecumenical setting. To those who were against integration, he stated that ‘[saying] “No!” ... means saying “Yes!” to something else – to what? We cannot escape this question; it is no mere accident that IMC meetings, such as Willingen in 1952 and Ghana in 1958, seemed strangely unable to give anything like a clear or strong lead.’<sup>205</sup> What these conferences struggled with was a fundamental problem, both for the IMC as well as for Global church mission as a whole: the issue of identity. Thus, as the end of the 1950s approached, and after over thirty years of talking about partnership, Nielsen could state that ‘the IMC in its thinking and work, in its whole atmosphere, is characterized by a “western-mission-board-perspective”. ...It inherits that history and cannot and should not run away from it; but it should face it clearly. One element in the recent years’ work of the IMC ... is undoubtedly a real struggle with this and attempts to get into a wider perspective.’<sup>206</sup> In elaborating on this theme, he writes that

[as] was pointed out at the Ghana Assembly, previously the missionary societies had problems; to-day they themselves are problems – the same

<sup>202</sup> Nielsen, ‘The Rôle of the IMC’, p. 200.

<sup>203</sup> Karsten Nissen, ‘Mission and Unity: A Look at the Integration of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches’ *International Review of Mission* 63 (October 1974), pp. 542-543.

<sup>204</sup> To read more about the arguments, both for and against integration, c.f.: Ronald K. Orchard, ‘Summary of the Discussion in Plenary Sessions on the Proposed Integration of the IMC and WCC’ in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *The Ghana Assembly of the International Missionary Council* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1958), pp. 156-164; Payne and Moses, *Why Integration?*, pp. 23-28.

<sup>205</sup> Nielsen, ‘The Rôle of the IMC’, p. 188.

<sup>206</sup> Nielsen, ‘The Rôle of the IMC’, p. 204.

applies to the IMC. ...The question to-day must be "What is Mission?" ... We (Churches in the east and the west) will not be able to call to Mission again with a good conscience and with power, until we have faced clearly and honestly the fact that we are no longer really sure what Mission is. We shall ... have to come to grips with this fundamental question and try to see what this means for our actual situation, our obligations and tasks. Only then can we hope to find our "direction" again, to find new "liberation" in our obedience. Only then can we hope to be able to break through this strange mixture of tiredness and frantic, impatient activity which so often seems to colour our missionary work and discussions and conferences about it.<sup>207</sup>

Those supportive of integration hoped that by merging mission (as represented by the IMC) officially into the growing ecumenical movement (the WCC), what would emerge would be a 'new structure which can more adequately care for the concerns of both.'<sup>208</sup>

In the end, the Accra Assembly voted to accept 'in principle the integration of the two Councils, and desires further steps to be taken toward this goal.'<sup>209</sup> The resolutions also noted that while there were still those who were against integration, the Assembly believed that this 'derives in part from a misunderstanding of the WCC and ignorance of the already existing relations between the two organizations.'<sup>210</sup> To extend time for the process of education and consultation with its members, the IMC requested that the WCC consider delaying their next assembly, scheduled for 1960. The WCC granted this request, and it is to the Third Assembly of the WCC, held in New Delhi in 1961, that we now turn.

### 7.9 Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches – New Delhi (1961)

In mid-November, 1961, delegates gathered in New Delhi for the Third Assembly of the WCC, the first to be held in Asia. When discussing the reasons for holding the Assembly in India, Slack states that the importance is found in what was symbolized. Now, with the continuing maturity and growth of the WCC,

[the] ecumenical movement ... stands not only for the unity of Christ's people throughout the whole inhabited earth, but also for the mission of Christ's people to the whole inhabited earth. That movement is not just one to which the stronger churches of the West have committed themselves, with a few

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<sup>207</sup> Nielsen, 'The Rôle of the IMC', p. 189.

<sup>208</sup> Payne and Moses, *Why Integration?*, p. 20

<sup>209</sup> 'The Ghana Assembly: Resolutions on Integration with the WCC' *International Review of Missions* 47 (1958), p. 150.

<sup>210</sup> 'The Ghana Assembly: Resolutions on Integration with the WCC', p. 151.

small churches in Asia and Africa on the fringe to provide an exotic touch. It is a movement of the whole Church throughout the whole inhabited earth.<sup>211</sup>

This growth in participation by the World churches, as compared to the assemblies at Amsterdam and Evanston, can be seen in both their increased attendance as well as the numbers of new churches being admitted to the Council. When looking at the increase and significance of attendance, Slack compares New Delhi to the first ecumenical missionary conference at Edinburgh:

Was this Asian meeting-place merely a *façade* for an overwhelmingly Western meeting? At the Edinburgh Conference held just over fifty years ago, amidst numbers very similar to those at New Delhi there were less than twenty from Asia, and there was no one from Africa at all. The geographical analysis was almost startlingly reassuring. Despite the far greater strength of the churches in Europe and America, fully a third of the Assembly came from elsewhere.... Fully a fifth of the Assembly came from Asia. 7½ % came from Africa. This represented a large jump from the first two Assemblies, for the rapid emergence of African territories from colonial dependence has usually been preceded by autonomy of the churches.<sup>212</sup>

One of the first orders of business for the assembly was the acceptance of new member churches. The official report notes that there were twenty-three applications, and of these, '[eleven] ... were from the churches in Africa. Two were from the churches in the Islands of the Pacific, the first from this region. Two were Pentecostal Churches of South America.'<sup>213</sup> As Krüger notes, the 'Younger Churches joined in sufficient strength to make their influence felt. ... Altogether eighteen of the twenty-three new member Churches belonged to the "Third World".'<sup>214</sup> The composition of the WCC was changing to be much more representative of the international ecumenical movement.

In the first official session of the assembly, the long anticipated integration of the IMC and the WCC became a reality. Addressing the delegates on the theme 'The Missionary Dimension of the Ecumenical Movement', Newbigin 'stressed the fact that the ecumenical movement owes its existence largely to the missionary movement and that the impulse to go into all the world as witnesses to Christ is always essential to the Church.'<sup>215</sup> Referring to the beginnings of the IMC, he recalled the words of

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<sup>211</sup> Kenneth Slack, *Despatch from New Delhi* (London: SCM Press, 1962), p. 16.

<sup>212</sup> Slack, *Despatch from New Delhi*, p. 19.

<sup>213</sup> *The New Delhi Report: The Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches, 1961* (London: SCM Press, 1962), p. 9; hereafter cited as *New Delhi Report*.

<sup>214</sup> Krüger, 'The Life and Activities of the World Council of Churches', p. 42.

<sup>215</sup> *New Delhi Report*, p. 3.

J.H. Oldham from 1920, who said that '[it] is becoming less and less possible to discuss missionary matters without representatives of the churches in the mission field, and any organization that may be created will probably have before very long to give way to something that may represent the beginning of a league of churches.'<sup>216</sup> Following the address, Dr. Christian Baeta reported that the IMC had officially approved the integration and, following his report, 'without a dissenting vote the plan as a whole was adopted.'<sup>217</sup>

When looking back at the significance of this step taken by the IMC and WCC, Slack states that '[at] first sight this does not seem a particularly inspiring idea, sounding indeed more like the equivalent of some "take-over bid", some gigantic merger creating a mammoth organisation. But it was in fact a great moment of ecumenical history.'<sup>218</sup> Bosch agrees, noting that the most significant aspect to integration was actually theological: 'Whatever criticism one might have about the way the integration took place, there can be no doubt that a crucial *theological* point was made: unity and mission belong together.'<sup>219</sup> Neill, writing just a few years after New Delhi, stated that 'if the Churches knew what they were doing on this occasion, the event could be epoch-making in the history of the Church. ...If the Churches knew what they were doing at New Delhi, they committed themselves to a revolution in their theology, in their understanding of the nature of the Church, in the organization of their manpower, in the distribution of their resources.'<sup>220</sup> After forty years of existence, the IMC became the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME), a division within the WCC. The WCC would benefit from all of its successes of the past, but would also inherit the lingering issues and problems regarding the relationships between the Global and World churches and the living out of partnership.

Now that integration had taken place, the newly formed CWME had to establish its position in the WCC. One of the most problematic relationships was with Inter-Church Aid, now renamed the Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee, and World Service (DICARWS), which had previously been a joint project of the IMC and WCC. As Newbigin states, through the integration process, although '[the] basic

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<sup>216</sup> *New Delhi Report*, p. 4.

<sup>217</sup> *New Delhi Report*, p. 5.

<sup>218</sup> Slack, *Despatch from New Delhi*, p. 33.

<sup>219</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, pp. 459-460.

<sup>220</sup> Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, p. 413.

problems had not been solved, ... a structure had been created in which they would be solved.'<sup>221</sup> Solving these problems, however, would prove to be difficult.

Historically, the IMC had been involved in assisting the World churches with *humanitarianism* and *development*, especially after the Madras meeting and the report by Davis entitled *The Economic Basis of the Church*. Now, Inter-Church Aid would be involved in a myriad of projects, as described in the official report from New Delhi:

Natural and social disaster create acute human needs, which should be met immediately by the churches acting together. There are also widespread endemic needs, such as poverty, mental and physical disease, hunger, illiteracy, unemployment and the plight of refugees which demand a maximum response in Christian service. ... In these areas ecumenical demonstrations of inter-church aid are needed and they should be shared by all churches regardless of denominational allegiances. The static distinction of 'receiving church' and 'giving church' must go so that all will share spiritual, material and personal gifts in the light of the total economy of the household of God.<sup>222</sup>

In addition to these issues of emergency and acute needs, New Delhi also foresaw Inter-Church Aid being involved in the area of *development*. For instance, '[projects] which increase the ability of people to attain self support are significant. There is a need to assist rural and industrial development by giving technical assistance and by providing training of people to share in building a responsible society under the inspiration and guidance of the churches.'<sup>223</sup> It is clear that most if not all of these had previously fallen under the auspices of the IMC; however, now funds could flow to the World churches outside of their long established links with Global church mission agencies. In the lead up to the New Delhi meeting, it was reported that '[the] partnership of churches around the world with the European churches has been strengthened; Inter-Church Aid Committees are now established in almost every European country so that the giving of aid, or the requesting of it, is the subject of ecumenical discussion.'<sup>224</sup> If Inter-Church Aid was to oversee these issues, now that

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<sup>221</sup> Newbiggin, 'Mission to Six Continents', p. 190.

<sup>222</sup> *New Delhi Report*, p. 113.

<sup>223</sup> *New Delhi Report*, p. 113. While *development* was not discussed much at New Delhi, when it was it was understood as being led and directed by the West. For example, in discussing steps towards peace and justice it was said that '[there] is a great opportunity for constructive action in the struggle for world development. *To share the benefits of civilization* with the whole of humanity is a noble and attainable objective [italics mine]. W.A. Viss 't Hooft (ed.) *New Delhi Speaks* (New York: Association Press, 1962), p. 24.

<sup>224</sup> *Evanston to New Delhi* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1961), p. 114.

integration was complete, what was the role of the CWME? New Delhi tried to solve this by giving each division a different focus:

The integration of the two world bodies will make for greater cooperation of the two Divisions in their common purpose to express the ecumenical solidarity of the churches through mutual aid in order to strengthen them in their life and mission. Within this common purpose the Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees is especially concerned to help the churches to serve the world around them, while the Division of World Mission and Evangelism is especially concerned to further the proclamation to the whole world of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the end that all men may believe in Him and be saved.<sup>225</sup>

While giving the two divisions separate mandates may have been a step in solving problems of overlapping function, 'it left open for discussion very large administrative questions, and these were to be the subject of continuing discussion during the ensuing years.'<sup>226</sup>

While the funding from one church to another for aid or *development* was now under the auspices of Inter-Church Aid, the forming of the CWME at New Delhi did lead to a new program called Joint Action for Mission (JAM). With JAM, instead of funds and resources being sent from a church in one part of the world to a church geographically distant, the proposal that came before New Delhi focused on churches in the same area cooperating and pooling their resources together for joint projects and initiatives. The JAM proposal stated that

missionary advance in many parts of the world requires a redeployment of the resources available in specific geographical areas. A necessary first step towards this is that churches and related missionary bodies in a given area should together survey the needs and opportunities confronting them and the total resources available to meet them. This process of survey should be followed by a consultation of the churches and mission bodies in that area, aimed at securing real and effective redeployment of resources in the light of the agreed goals.<sup>227</sup>

It was hoped that JAM would promote partnership practiced locally, across denominational and confessional lines, and would assist churches and missions to cooperate in mutually agreed-on objectives. While up to now the partnership debate had primarily focused on relationships between churches connected historically, JAM was to extend partnership to all Christians, calling them to cooperation in the sharing of resources for joint witness and service.

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<sup>225</sup> Newbigin, 'Mission to Six Continents', p. 190.

<sup>226</sup> Newbigin, 'Mission to Six Continents', p. 190.

<sup>227</sup> *New Delhi Report*, p. 251.

When looking back at the significance of the New Delhi Assembly, one can notice a number of important contributions. First, compared to the first two WCC assemblies, New Delhi allowed for much more in the way of contributions from the World churches. The report notes that, with total membership up to 198 churches, '[the] churches of Asia and Africa are now playing an active and increasing part in the world-wide Christian movement. That the Church of India carried their responsibility as hosts ... so effectively, and that eleven of the new members of the Council are from Africa, are important testimonies to a new ecumenical situation.'<sup>228</sup> Second, through programs such as Inter-Church Aid and Joint Action for Mission, the churches 'not only determined to stay together (as at Amsterdam) and to grow together (as at Evanston) but to move out together into the world's struggle for social justice and international peace.'<sup>229</sup> Finally, the integration of the IMC and WCC was obviously the most important aspect for the future of partnership. In the first report of the CWME, it was stated that '[our] temptation will be to think of the Division simply as the continuation of the interests of the International Missionary Council with emphasis on Asia, Africa, and South America. We must resist this temptation. This is the Division of World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches. We are concerned not with three continents but with six.'<sup>230</sup> It was believed that seeing the mission of the church as a witness to six continents 'marks a new stage in the Christian world mission. The old distinction between "sending" and "receiving" churches begins to break down. All churches are more clearly seen as partners, on a plane of complete mutuality, in the common responsibility of making Christ known, loved and obeyed throughout the world.'<sup>231</sup>

#### 7.10 The Mexico City Meeting of the CWME (1963)

The first full assembly of the CWME met in Mexico City in December 1963. Like the conferences at Willingen and Accra, the assembly was rather small, with about 200 in attendance. Ranson writes that '[in] theme and structure and to a large extent membership, this first full meeting ... looked very much like a meeting of the old International Missionary Council.'<sup>232</sup> That said, however, he notes that when one

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<sup>228</sup> *New Delhi Report*, p. 54.

<sup>229</sup> *New Delhi Report*, p. 55.

<sup>230</sup> *New Delhi Report*, p. 250.

<sup>231</sup> *New Delhi Report*, p. 55.

<sup>232</sup> Charles W. Ranson, 'Mexico City 1963' *International Review of Missions* 53 (1964), p. 137.

looks at the theme of the conference, 'God's Mission and Our Task', one can note a subtle but important shift. For at least the past quarter century, the emphasis of mission had been primarily 'church-centric', a concept that gained currency at Madras in 1938. Mexico City continued what Willingen had started, shifting the emphasis from a church-centric mission to a God-centred mission, a continuation and deepening of the concept of the *missio Dei*. Again, according to Ranson, '[missionary] theology cannot by-pass the Church. But it must find its deepest roots in the Being of God as Redeemer and the Lordship of Christ, not only in the Church but in the world. This change of theological focus was not merely evident in the theme.... It permeated the thought of the meeting and ... affected its *ethos* and its mood.'<sup>233</sup>

In addition to a continued emphasis on the *missio Dei*, another significant change was recognized at Mexico City, one which was to have great ramifications on the understanding of the *home base* of missions. While conferences and assemblies since at least the end of World War II had recognized the world as a revolutionary place, the term had mostly been applied to areas outside of North America. Spike asserts that prior to this assembly, while Americans had been anxious about international conflicts like the Cuban revolution, as well as domestic issues like racism, 'over all the impress of a successful, affluent nation busily intent on creating a new technological society was dominant.'<sup>234</sup> This notion, however, was shattered as

last spring began a series of events that shocked us into the awareness of how wrong we had been. The desperation of black people in many parts of the country reached new depths.... Hundreds went to jail in Birmingham. Up to date over 50,000 people have been arrested for civil rights demonstrations of one kind or another in this year. We have been through a series of violent deaths from Medgar Evers to our own beloved President that has shaken us to the core. Suddenly our image of who we are as a people seems very different.<sup>235</sup>

As the United States experienced revolution on home soil, Spike writes that Americans were beginning to see what had been just below the surface, but

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<sup>233</sup> Ranson, 'Mexico City 1963', pp. 137-138.

<sup>234</sup> Robert W. Spike, 'The New Shape of Christian Mission in the United States' in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *Witness in Six Continents* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1964), p. 119.

<sup>235</sup> Spike, 'The New Shape of Christian Mission in the United States', p. 120. Racism, in the form of slavery and, later, Jim Crow laws, had been a very real issue for the United States from its very founding. However, the civil rights era, along with the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., brought this issue to the nation's attention as never before. During this era, black theology rose in importance, especially in the writings of James Cone. For Cone's early thought and writings, cf., *Black Theology and Black Power* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1969); *A Black Theology of Liberation* (New York: Lippincott, 1970); and *God of the Oppressed* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1975).



nonetheless present, for many years: 'It is as if the mask of self-delusion had been removed. We have to face what we ought to have known was always present beneath the veneer of generosity and gregarious goodwill. We see ourselves in our darker side, selfish, grasping, suspicious and are shocked by the capacity for violence.'<sup>236</sup>

At Mexico City, with this new insight came new opportunity for mission and partnership, for according to Spike,

this is why mission forces need help from our brethren in other lands. The awareness of what it means to be a missionary in a revolutionary world is coming to us late. We need the help of mission workers who have experience in ministries of education and healing in hostile environments. We need the support of the prayers and offerings of churches from every corner of the earth. The oneness of the mission has never before been more apparent to many of us.<sup>237</sup>

In light of the changed world situation, at Mexico City it was believed that 'the underlying conviction is that the Churches in every land must become one authentic missionary community. ...The home base is now everywhere and as we recognize this in every country the missionary task takes on new perspective.'<sup>238</sup> The official message of the conference stated that '[we] therefore affirm that this missionary movement now involves Christians in all six continents and in all lands. It must be the common witness of the whole Church, bringing the whole Gospel to the whole world.'<sup>239</sup> These were all wonderfully worded resolutions, but similar statements had been made before. John Mott at Edinburgh (1910), Daniel Johnson Fleming's *Whither Bound in Missions?*, and the Jerusalem Conference of 1928 had each looked forward to a time when all churches would be both sending and receiving and where the world would be the mission field. Unlike past conferences, however, Mexico City perceived that the time to put *rhetoric* into action had arrived and made new proposals on a number of programs, including Joint Action for Mission, the preparation and calling of missionaries, and educating the *home base*.

The program of Joint Action for Mission (JAM), formally initiated at the New Delhi Assembly, came about as a direct result of the partnership debate. As Latham notes, "[partnership]" was the note struck at Whitby in 1948. Since then there has

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<sup>236</sup> Spike, 'The New Shape of Christian Mission in the United States', p. 122.

<sup>237</sup> Spike, 'The New Shape of Christian Mission in the United States', p. 123.

<sup>238</sup> C.H. Hwang, 'Into A New Era Together' in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *Witness in Six Continents* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1964), p. 117.

<sup>239</sup> 'The Message' in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *Witness in Six Continents* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1964), p. 175.

been the deepening conviction that, so long as “partnership” is understood as the perpetuation or even modification of the historic relationship between mission board and daughter Church, the evangelistic advance of the Churches in a given area will be frustrated.’<sup>240</sup> At its inception, it was recognized that, if properly implemented, JAM would necessitate broad changes in how both Global and World churches worked with each other. Latham states that

[the] implications of this idea are far reaching, affecting the mission boards with their “commitments” to specific younger Churches.... The younger Churches are affected too, for some are dependent for finance and personnel on overseas resources and are very reluctant to consider the possibility of sharing such resources or re-deploying them. This call to Joint Action for Mission challenges traditional conceptions and cherished fraternal links from both ends of the present structures, and demands new structures.<sup>241</sup>

As delegates met at Mexico City they realized that, although the JAM program had only begun in 1961, some of the issues mentioned above were already becoming problematic. As the minutes of the conference state, a ‘hesitancy became evident’ due to ‘formidable barriers’ such as:

Theological and ecclesiological factors (e.g. to what church would converts won through Joint Action for Mission belong?). Lack of mutual trust and of experience in co-operation.... Fear that a programme of Joint Action for Mission might be imposed by some outside authority, coupled with a fear of Joint Action for Mission being understood only in terms of some particular rigid pattern. Above all, the really radical demands for sharing of information and pooling resources which Joint Action for Mission involves, with the consequent need for change in existing programmes and relationships, and disturbance to vested interests of congregations, churches, and mission agencies.<sup>242</sup>

In response to these reservations on the part of churches to participate in JAM, Mexico City said that ‘[a] somewhat more flexible and inclusive definition of Joint Action for Mission may be useful. Full disclosure and sharing of information is always requisite, but the redeployment of resources in personnel and money may be seen as involving primarily “mission” or outreach funds and not necessarily the total budgets of congregations and churches.’<sup>243</sup> In the light of these issues, a serious program of education for both mission boards and local churches was recommended;

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<sup>240</sup> Robert O. Latham, *God For All Men* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1964), p. 71.

<sup>241</sup> Latham, *God for All Men*, pp. 71-72.

<sup>242</sup> *Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism: Mexico City, December 8<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, 1963* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1964), p. 59; hereafter cited as *Minutes of Mexico City CWME*.

<sup>243</sup> *Minutes of Mexico City CWME*, p. 60.

however, since Mexico City could point to few, if any, real successes of JAM, it was admitted that '[any] attempt to state in advance precisely what joint action must involve in any given situation would be a mistake. We shall learn what kind of sharing it requires only in actual situations and through experience.'<sup>244</sup> When judging the effectiveness of JAM for assisting churches in living out partnership, it is evident that there were many barriers to its success. While delegates at Mexico City could state that '[we] believe that joint action in mission is the next step in obedience, to which we are all called together'<sup>245</sup>, due to issues of misunderstanding, lack of trust, and, most importantly, fear of living out the radical demands for which JAM called, the program would continue to hinder rather than foster the growth of ecumenical partnerships.

Because Mexico City recognized that mission was now to be carried out in six continents rather than just three, the changed situation necessitated a discussion on the training of missionaries. While many of the findings are repeats of discussions at Willingen in 1952 (e.g. the need for training in three phases: pre-service, in-service, and during the first furlough), Mexico City did serve to further the understanding of the missionaries and their task. First, and in line with JAM, it was stated that '[a] church in any part of the world should no longer have to look for help in its local missionary responsibility to a single nation, race or denomination, but should be able to call into partnership in its task both persons and resources from many different directions.'<sup>246</sup> To the churches of Global Christianity, some of which may have felt that they were not in need of assistance, Mexico City had a reproach: 'Churches which are rich in resources and do not feel the need of missionaries from elsewhere to aid them in their local missionary responsibilities should ask themselves whether in reality they are not "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked" and in need of spiritual help from other churches.'<sup>247</sup>

It is also important to note that, for the first time, Mexico City used the term 'partnership' in defining a missionary, stating that the missionary is 'the servant of the Church who leaves his own country or culture to proclaim the Gospel in partnership with the Church where it is already at work, or with the purpose of planting the

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<sup>244</sup> *Minutes of Mexico City CWME*, p. 60.

<sup>245</sup> 'The Witness of the Christian Church Across National and Confessional Boundaries' in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *Witness in Six Continents* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1964), p. 165.

<sup>246</sup> 'The Witness of the Christian Church Across National and Confessional Boundaries', p. 163.

<sup>247</sup> 'The Witness of the Christian Church Across National and Confessional Boundaries', p. 163.

Church where it has not yet been planted.’<sup>248</sup> Interestingly, at least one of the delegates, in response to this definition, felt that, ‘in order to solve the question of the integration of missionaries with the receiving churches, the phrase “in partnership” should be dropped, and it might be said instead that the missionary was under the authority of the receiving church.’<sup>249</sup> Finally, delegates stated that ‘[churches], mission boards, and missionary societies should be encouraged to prepare plans by which the missionary force will become international, interracial, and interdenominational. ...Ecumenical experience has revealed that co-operation in action can take place at almost every point. The most intractable frontier is that of structure, ecclesiastical and missionary.’<sup>250</sup>

Finally, Mexico City had much to say concerning the traditional, Western *home base* of missions. Despite the agreement that mission was to (and from) all six continents, Taylor admitted that the changes necessary to make this a reality at local church level would come very slowly since ‘[certain] missionaries and their supporters still manage to think and talk and act as though Christ’s mission rests in their hands alone.’<sup>251</sup> According to Hwang, however, if perceptions at the traditional *home base* were going to change, then ‘we must revolutionize the relationships which exist between all Churches.’<sup>252</sup> To revolutionize these relationships, delegates understood that a couple of issues needed to be addressed. First, the type of education offered had to change. According to Latham,

[there] is a generation of difference between ‘missionary education’, as it has been widely understood and used, and ‘education for mission’, which is the accent today. Missionary education was concerned with the ‘home base’ of missions identified with the Western Churches, and at its best sought to present the call and challenge of overseas mission as part of the revealed purpose of God, in which the Churches participate by sending missionaries, by regular intercession, and by generous giving. The ‘need’ overseas was presented in films, photographs, magazines, letters, and the visitation of the churches by missionaries and mission board representatives. It was ‘overseas mission promotion’.<sup>253</sup>

At Mexico City, the conference itself attempted to be ‘symbolic of the new emphasis. For the first time representatives of the “home mission boards” sat with

<sup>248</sup> *Minutes of Mexico City CWME*, pp. 100-101.

<sup>249</sup> *Minutes of Mexico City CWME*, p. 22.

<sup>250</sup> ‘The Witness of the Christian Church Across National and Confessional Boundaries’, p. 164.

<sup>251</sup> John V. Taylor, ‘Helping Churches Grow’ in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *Witness in Six Continents* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1964), p. 59.

<sup>252</sup> Hwang, ‘Into A New Era Together’, p. 117.

<sup>253</sup> Latham, *God for All Men*, pp. 76-77.

representatives of the “foreign mission boards”, so that by the “older” Churches mission at home and overseas was conceived as part of one activity.<sup>254</sup> Second, it was also realized that if meaningful change was going to take place, the content of education would have to change as well. Since the *home base* was now seen to be everywhere, ‘education for mission was now ... to be concerned with the education of the local church for mission in its secular neighborhood, whether that local church be in the New England cities of America, the new territories of Hong Kong, or the newly independent states of Africa. For this task on a world scale each local church both contributes to and receives from the whole Church.’<sup>255</sup>

Again, however, Mexico City struggled to turn a call to action into meaningful change. The task of rethinking education for mission was given to a small task team, and all the constituent members of the WCC were to be encouraged to participate. Latham states that ‘[now] that the home base of mission is in every continent, and the receiving church is everywhere, a new element in education for mission is the sharing and cross-fertilization which can enrich the Church everywhere.’<sup>256</sup> The issue was not in reaching consensus on this issue at a world gathering of CWME, but in figuring out exactly how this sharing and cross-fertilization was to be facilitated in an effective and meaningful way.

Mexico City understood that what previous conferences had predicted and prayed for, mission in six continents, was finally becoming a reality. In the concluding section of the assembly’s ‘Message’, Mexico City states that ‘[the] dichotomy of Church and mission as separate structures and activities is breaking down. Mission is seen to be the primary function of the whole Church in every place ... requiring the resources of the whole church.’<sup>257</sup> While delegates called for action, it seems that at least some present were worried that *rhetoric* would not result in any significant changes. The members of the youth delegation, in their statement to the assembly, said that ‘[we] are grateful for the promise of a new era in the missionary enterprise.... However, we have heard many church conferences making statements and expounding pious platitudes, but little real change has resulted. We urge

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<sup>254</sup> Latham, *God for All Men*, p. 77.

<sup>255</sup> Latham, *God for All Men*, pp. 77-78.

<sup>256</sup> Latham, *God for All Men*, p. 79.

<sup>257</sup> Latham, *God for All Men*, p. 83.

Churches and mission agencies to translate the decisions at Mexico City into action.’<sup>258</sup>

### 7.11 Were Things Really Changing?

Delegates left Mexico City having proclaimed the beginning of a new era of mission to six continents and a new hope for the future. However, looking back over events since the end of World War II, both secular and ecclesiastic, one could rightly ask whether things were really changing. At the conclusion of World War II, there had been great hopes that the world was ending its time of war and conflict. The United Nations was formed with a strong mandate to maintain world peace and cooperation. The colonial era was, by and large, coming to an end with new nation states coming into being every year. Peoples long oppressed were experiencing freedom to govern themselves and it was believed that they would follow the West’s lead in development so that the fruits of modern technology, education, and healthcare would be available to all.

But with the war in Korea, the UN quickly proved unable to mediate conflict effectively. Despite people’s ability to govern themselves, many in the Third World still found themselves at the mercy of Western economic imperialism and neocolonialism. And even with the growth of *development*, at the end of the First Development Decade the UN admitted that the gap between the haves and have-nots had actually widened. In the church, the pattern was similar. In the WCC, the membership of World churches had grown and calls to live as ‘partners in obedience’ were discussed and debated; at Mexico City it was hoped that *rhetoric* would finally lead to action. Plans for international cooperation like Inter-Church Aid and Joint Action for Mission were implemented with the expectation that they would help churches partner together for the benefit of all.

However, by the end of the decade, it had become clear that cooperation and partnership were not necessarily improving; passing resolutions was no guarantee for change. Because of vested interest and an unwillingness to live out the radical new programs, the purpose and effectiveness of Inter-Church Aid and Joint Action for Mission began to be called into question. Despite well worded resolutions and, at

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<sup>258</sup> ‘Statement to the Members of the Commission and the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches’ in Ronald K. Orchard (ed.) *Witness in Six Continents* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1964), p. 176.

least on the part of some, the sincere desire for relationships of mutuality, partnership continued to be primarily practiced as benevolent trusteeship. As the end of the 1960s approached, some involved in missions from both the Global and World churches began to call for a moratorium on missionaries and money from the West, questioning the very basis of many Global Christians' understanding of mission.

#### 7.12 Tracing the Four Themes

This time of revolutions effected the ecumenical movement and the quest for partnerships in many ways. As more and more nations and peoples in the South gained their independence, World churches also lessened their dependence on the Global churches with which they had historic ties. As a result, ecumenical gatherings addressed the topic of partnership as never before. At Whitby an entire report, entitled 'Partners in Obedience', was compiled on the subject. The Willingen IMC meeting acknowledging that mission was no longer only to three continents but to six. And Mexico City hoped that the revolutions taking place within the West, and especially the United States, would open doors to dialogue and sharing between Global and World Christians. However, when looking at the issue of the *home base*, Global church leaders had to admit that, while partnership and sharing were being increasingly discussed at ecumenical gatherings, their constituencies continued to think of mission as expansion. And as at past conferences, Global church leaders pinned their hopes on education. While noting past failures on this front, they challenged churches to not repeat past efforts of 'mission education', but instead to focus on 'education for mission', emphasizing the need for sharing and cross-fertilization between the churches of Global and World Christianity.

The continued growth and participation of World churches during this time also affected the issue of *authority*. Whitby confirmed and expanded what earlier conferences had said on this subject, noting that World churches should have the power to call and oversee the missionaries they receive, as well as administer all funds channelled to them. Also, during this time we see the first call for multilateral, rather than bilateral, relationships between Global and World churches. However, the biggest contribution came from the Accra IMC meeting which focused not simply on changing structures, but instead recognized that the most important change needed was not in policies but in relationships. Despite these decisions, delegates had to

admit that many Global churches, as well as the missionaries they sent, continued to seek control and power in their relationships with World Christians.

The revolutionary new understanding of development during this time had obvious affects on Global church efforts at *humanitarianism* and *development*. As at previous conferences, discussions on this topic at Whitby continued to focus on issues such as agriculture and industrial life. However, after 1949 the ecumenical church, and especially Global Christianity, completely bought into Truman's redefinition of development. While admitting that both organizations assisted many who were suffering during these revolutionary times, Inter-Church Aid and Joint Action for Mission were also brought into existence for the purpose of channelling funds and expertise to the World churches and the 'underdeveloped' countries in which they existed.

Lastly, during this time of revolutionary change, there were many resolutions from both Global and World churches concerning the need for partnership, sharing, and mutual learning. However, while delegates at all the conferences discussed in this chapter admitted that the hoped for changes would be difficult to attain, it would only be later that the ecumenical movement grasp just how wide the gap was between *rhetoric* and *reality*.



## Chapter 8

### Partnership in a Time of Reassessment

During the 1950s and 1960s, many around the world were optimistic about the future. Colonization was coming to an end as the countries of Asia and Africa were gaining independence. The project of development was in full swing, seeking to help these newly free peoples ‘catch up’ with the West. Finally, the United Nations served as a resource and voice for newly independent peoples, as well as a tool to implement and coordinate development programs. However, as the last quarter of the twentieth century approached, it was clear that enthusiasm about the future was waning as disparities in power, most notably economic, actually increased between the countries of the North and South. The Cold War struggles between the forces of free-market capitalism and communism were having profound effects on countries and peoples trying to exert their newly found freedom and autonomy in world affairs. The imposition of outside aid, tied of course to patronage to the donor, served to thwart any initiative at home grown economic solutions. Likewise, the West’s efforts to integrate Third World economies into a world system through programs of ‘structural adjustment’ simply reinforced old patterns of domination and dependence, leading to charges of a growing neocolonialism. It was quickly becoming apparent that, by the end of the UN’s First Development Decade, the economic gap between the West and the rest was not being bridged but was actually widening.

Similarly, issues of power caused many in the ecumenical church to continue to question the state of relationships between Global and World Christianity. For at least four decades, ecumenical discussions had focused on partnership; however, much of that discussion had revolved around issues *internal* to the churches, such as the *authority* to control of finances and the calling and supervising of missionaries. However, the widening gap between the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’ within the world economic system also affected the power dynamics between Global and World churches. The churches of Global Christianity were in a position to benefit greatly from these economic disparities; however, we will see that during this time they were being challenged more and more to live in mutuality and solidarity with their sisters and brothers in the World churches. As a result, while deliberations around the issue of power had until this time dealt primarily with issues internal to the church, from this point forward they will primarily concern issues outside of the church; namely, the socio-economic contexts in which they existed. As we will see, this was to be a

time when the Global and World churches were challenged to reassess their relationships with each other as well as to the contexts and cultures in which they lived.

Because the growing realization and acknowledgement of power issues external to the churches was a new and vitally important development during this period, this subject will shape the discussions around each of the four issues that we are tracing. However, while the issues of the *home base*, *humanitarianism* and *development*, and *authority* are all important, the issue of *rhetoric* and *reality*, while not as apparent in the previous chapter, will be the most prominently during this period.

### 8.1 Whose Independence?

As decolonization continued, the newly independent states faced many challenges. One of these was, of course, economic development, which was felt to be the catalyst for social and cultural development. As Arnold notes, '[every] new state sought rapid economic progress as the only way to satisfy the expectations of the people as a whole and development, development strategies, five-year plans, aid, loans, and grants, and technical assistance added a new dimension, not to say vocabulary, to government activities.'<sup>1</sup> However, despite the emphasis and billions of dollars spent, by the end of the First Development Decade it was becoming clear that the South was not on a path of growth through stages, but instead, the gap between rich and poor was widening. To address this issue, George Woods, President of the World Bank, proposed in 1967 that an international team of experts gather to 'study the consequences of twenty years of development assistance, assess the results, clarify the errors and propose the policies which will work better in the future.'<sup>2</sup> Woods asked former Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson, along with a team of seven from both the developed and developing world, to conduct a study of how development had been practiced, as well as make recommendations for the future.

The study was published in 1969 under the title *Partners in Development*. From the beginning, Pearson acknowledged that '[the] widening gap between the

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<sup>1</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 354.

<sup>2</sup> Lester B. Pearson, *Partners in Development: Report of the Commission on International Development* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969), p. vii.

developed and developing countries has become a central issue of our time.’<sup>3</sup> Despite this widening gap, or maybe because of it, the report found that ‘international support for development is now flagging. In some of the rich countries its feasibility, even its very purpose, is in question. The climate surrounding foreign aid programs is heavy with disillusion and distrust. ...[We] have reached a point of crisis.’<sup>4</sup> Pearson also stated that support was not only declining in the rich countries, but that ‘[on] the developing side too there are signs of frustration and impatience. In much of the developing world there is a sense of disillusion about the very nature of the aid relationship.’<sup>5</sup> To critics in both developed and developing countries, the report’s reply was the need to work together: the need for *partnership*:

Wealth does not entitle a rich and powerful country to dominate another country’s national life as a consequence of the aid it may have given. On the other hand, it is impossible for any country to transfer public funds abroad without being able to satisfy its citizens that these funds are being effectively used to reach acceptable development goals and that the receiving countries are making strong efforts of their own to improve their situations. The ‘development relationship,’ which is at the heart of efficient aid policy, must be based on a clear division of responsibilities which meets the needs of both *partners* [italics mine].<sup>6</sup>

The report acknowledged that while national self interest was obviously a motivating factor in the giving of aid, the main reason should be a moral one: ‘that it is only right for those who have to share with those who have not.’<sup>7</sup> And although the report was quite forthright in its condemnation of using aid for purposes of enlarging power, the main recommendations were quite tame. Included in these recommendations was the need to expand the current system of bilateral aid relationships, instead seeking ‘new multilateral groupings which provide for annual reviews of the development performance of recipients and the discharge of aid and related commitments by donors.’<sup>8</sup> While it was suggested that the World Bank be the main coordinator of these new, multilateral relationships, since the World Bank was controlled and directed by the North (principally the United States), one can question how effective this strategy would be. Another recommendation was that each developed country ‘should increase its resource transfer to developing countries to a minimum of 1 per

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<sup>3</sup> Pearson, *Partners in Development*, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Pearson, *Partners in Development*, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Pearson, *Partners in Development*, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Pearson, *Partners in Development*, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> Pearson, *Partners in Development*, p. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Pearson, *Partners in Development*, p. 135

cent of its Gross National Product as rapidly as possible, and in no case later than 1975.’<sup>9</sup>

It was believed if these practices could be put into place, in a short space of time Third World countries would be put ‘in a position where they can realize their aspirations with regard to economic progress without relying on foreign aid.’<sup>10</sup> When assessing the significance of the Pearson Report, one must admit that although calls for changes in donor/recipient relationships were needed, national self interest and Cold War politics were to have much more to say about international relations than partnership and multilateralism. Despite this study and its recommendations, ‘[by] the end of the UN Decade of Development not a great deal of development had been achieved while the rich-poor gap was widening rather than being bridged.’<sup>11</sup>

In the early 1970s and the first years of the Second Development Decade, there were major reactions against Western imperialism, including independence in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau (1974), as well as North Vietnam’s entrance into Saigon in April 1975, signaling the defeat of the United States. One of the most influential reactions, however, was the oil crisis following the October War in 1973<sup>12</sup>. As Rist notes, within two months of the conflict, ‘OPEC countries had quadrupled the price of oil, underlining the vulnerability of the Western ... economies, which largely depended upon Arab countries in this key strategic field. *For the first time, the countries of the South – albeit the richest among them – were acting together in a way that could seriously disturb the economy in the North.*’<sup>13</sup>

Building on these successes, leaders from the South proposed a New International Economic Order (NIEO) at a United Nations meeting in 1974. The NIEO proposed changes in international relations, including greater amounts of aid, the transfer of technologies, and most importantly guarantees that each sovereign state could control its own natural resources. The measure passed one hundred and twenty to six, with ten abstentions. Not surprisingly, however, all no votes as well as abstentions were from countries in the North. Arnold writes that while many of the

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<sup>9</sup> Pearson, *Partners in Development*, p. 152. Interestingly, the United States, the richest country in the world, has still never met this recommendation.

<sup>10</sup> Pearson, *Partners in Development*, p. 11.

<sup>11</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 166.

<sup>12</sup> The October War, also known as the Yom Kippur War, was fought from October 6-26, 1973, and involved a number of Arab states, including Syria and Egypt, which attacked Israel. Due to European and US support for Israel, especially militarily, OPEC cut production, thus substantially raising the price of oil.

<sup>13</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 142.

NIEO policies could have made some differences in the process of development, '[such] demands for change ... really amounted to a demand for the rich North to show greater generosity in its dealings with the poor South. ... There was, however, little evidence to suggest that the rich North was prepared to make any such surrender of advantages that were the source of its hegemony, and a great deal of evidence to the contrary.'<sup>14</sup> Despite these facts,

[the] idea of an NIEO was important ... not because it succeeded – it did not – but because it helped emphasize the principal problems that surrounded all North-South issues. These are not questions of compassion, equity or justice, though each has its place, but questions of power. The countries of the North, then and later, wielded approximately 90 per cent of the world's power in terms of the decisions they took and enforced and they did so because they controlled the world economy. And that was why the NIEO failed, because to ask the rich to surrender this power was unrealistic.<sup>15</sup>

Even though it was evident that there was no chance of the NIEO succeeding, these challenges from the South could not go unheeded:

In the aftermath of the mid-1970s oil crisis and demands for a New International Economic Order the rich nations of the North, which had no intention of facilitating any basic changes in the world economic system, nonetheless realized that some real concessions – or what passed for concessions – had to be made to the poor countries of the South. The Brandt Report – *North-South: A Programme for Survival* (The Report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues under the Chairmanship of Willy Brant) – was the answer.<sup>16</sup>

As Rist notes, '[like] Truman's Point Four, the North-South Report states that "the task is to free mankind from dependence and oppression, from hunger and distress."' <sup>17</sup> Like Pearson's report from 1969, the Brant Report also spoke about the importance of North-South partnership and an era of new relations between nations. The report, however, did not 'explain how ... targets were to be met, who would provide the means and what kinds of pressure would be exerted upon the rich nations in order to make them share a substantial proportion of their wealth and know-how with the poor. Like its predecessor, the Brant Report was soon largely ignored.'<sup>18</sup> Thus, the Second Development Decade, while starting with some promise of change

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<sup>14</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 432.

<sup>15</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 431.

<sup>16</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 450.

<sup>17</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, p. 161.

<sup>18</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 452.

in relationships of power, ended very much like the first, with the gap between the rich and poor widening by the day.

The North could rest easy; the Brant Report had answered the challenge of the NIEO, giving lip service to a change in relationships while uneven relationships of power and influence remained intact. While the concept of partnership had been widely discussed by those involved in international development as far back as the late 1960s,

[during] the 1980s a distinct pattern emerged in the relationship between the donors and ... recipients and it was a disturbing pattern because it highlighted all that was wrong about what ought to have been a genuine two-way partnership for development. The donors always *knew* what had to be done. Structural adjustment programmes (SAPS) or economic recovery programmes (ERPs) were devised in Washington or Paris by teams of highly competent economists but never on the ground in Africa, just as an earlier generation of 'experts' had devised five-year plans for newly independent African states. If these planners ... had been impartial their remoteness, their production of solutions from on high would not have mattered so much, but they were not impartial. From their early beginnings the World Bank and International Monetary Fund had been hijacked by the West whose principal countries, led by the United States, controlled the voting power and soon came to see these international financial institutions as instruments for imposing Western economic policies upon Africa.<sup>19</sup>

Throughout the period under discussion, '[essentially], the donor-recipient relationship was (and remains) one of control.'<sup>20</sup> As Darwin notes, '[far] from heralding a "world of nations", decolonization's unexpected course seemed to have set the scene for new kinds of empire.'<sup>21</sup> The gap between the haves and have-nots would continue to grow, and nations of the North, whether overtly or in the guise of partnerships and multilateralism, continued to assert and protect national and commercial interests, despite the human costs.

It would not, of course, be fair or accurate to blame all of the Third World's woes directly on the West; they had, in many cases, willing accomplices. In discussing decolonization in Africa, Arnold writes that '[the] fruits of office have always beguiled even those who began as dedicated revolutionaries. Arguably, the greatest achievement of the colonial powers was to create a brainwashed elite whose members felt more at home in the metropolitan countries than in their own and who,

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<sup>19</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 757.

<sup>20</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 741.

<sup>21</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, pp. 476-477.

at home, wanted all the appurtenances of Western culture and material comforts....<sup>22</sup> Franz Fanon, writing in 1961, noted that many of the same 'divide and rule' tactics used by the colonial governments could and would be used by the 'brainwashed elite' for their own ends:

National consciousness, instead of being the all-embracing crystallization of the innermost hopes of the whole people, instead of being the immediate and most obvious result of the mobilization of the people, will be in any case only an empty shell, a crude and fragile travesty of what might have been. ...[When] dealing with young and independent nations, the nation is passed over for the race, and the tribe is preferred to the state. These are the cracks in the edifice which show the process of retrogression, that is so harmful and prejudicial to national effort and national unity. We shall see that such retrograde steps with all the weaknesses and serious dangers that they entail are the historical result of the incapacity of the national middle class to rationalize popular action, that is to say their incapacity to see into the reasons for that action.<sup>23</sup>

According to Fanon, the only way in which a country could remain true to the dreams and aspirations of its people was if those in power stayed in connection with and actually took direction from the masses:

A country that really wishes to answer the questions that history puts to it, that wants to develop not only its towns but also the brains of its inhabitants, such a country must possess a trustworthy political party. The party is not a tool in the hands of the government. Quite on the contrary, the party is a tool in the hands of the people; it is they who decide on the policy that the government carries out.<sup>24</sup>

Fanon believed that for countries of the Third World to experience this kind of government, 'we must above all rid ourselves of the very Western, very bourgeois and therefore contemptuous attitude that the masses are incapable of governing themselves. In fact, experience proves that the masses understand perfectly the most complicated problems.'<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, Fanon foresaw that in many cases the ruling party, the very ones who were charged to represent and serve the masses, would instead choose to empower the elite minority. And when that happens,

[the] living party, which ought to make possible the free exchange of ideas which have been elaborated according to the real needs of the mass of the people, has been transformed into a trade union of individual interests. ...There no longer exists the fruitful give-and-take from the bottom to the top and from the top to the bottom which creates and guarantees democracy in a

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<sup>22</sup> Arnold, *Africa: A Modern History*, p. 62.

<sup>23</sup> Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), pp. 148-149.

<sup>24</sup> Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 184-185.

<sup>25</sup> Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, p. 188.

party. ...Privileges multiply and corruption triumphs, while morality declines. ...The party, a true instrument of power in the hands of the bourgeoisie, reinforces the machine, and ensures that the people are hemmed in and immobilized. The party helps the government to hold the people down.<sup>26</sup>

The more the world seemed to change, the more it stayed the same. While the vast majority of peoples in the South were technically 'free', forces beyond their control, both at home and abroad, prevented most from experiencing freedom and a true voice in the direction of their lives. The Western powers had developed, believing they had reached Rostow's final stage growth (the age of high mass-consumption), and felt it their obligation to direct the growth of the rest (as partners, of course), all the while protecting their own national interests. And in many Third World countries, the forces of liberation had become, for most of its citizens, simply trading one oppressor for another. At the end of the day, due to pressure and coercion both within and without, the promise of and optimism about the future, so prevalent in the early days of decolonization, proved to be illusory. As Prashad notes:

Created by a wave of struggle, the new nations neither reorganized social relations effectively nor disrupted the colonial-style state structure bequeathed to it. By making alliances with the old social classes and adopting the colonial bureaucratic structure, the new nations essentially vitiated the Third World agenda. Military rule or military force became the order of the day, as the Third World regimes drove their demobilized populations to do what they had envisioned. The people who had driven the anticolonial struggles and had welcomed the Third World could only be seen by the new nations as compliant followers, or else as inert, or as foes.<sup>27</sup>

Into this world, where relationships of coercion, exploitation, and Western-style 'development' were the norm, the ecumenical movement continued to seek relationships of partnership and mutuality.

## 8.2 Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches – Uppsala (1968)

In July 1968, delegates from around the ecumenical world gathered in Uppsala, Sweden, for the fourth assembly of the WCC. Since the last assembly at New Delhi in 1961, the WCC's constituency had continued to grow so that at Uppsala, there were 704 delegates representing 235 member churches. Goodall explains that although the conference met to discuss the churches' role in the world, the meeting was decidedly different from any of its predecessors:

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<sup>26</sup> Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 170-171.

<sup>27</sup> Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, pp. 209.



The most obvious and widely acknowledged feature of the Assembly was its preoccupation – at times, almost, its obsession – with the revolutionary ferment of our time, with questions of social and international responsibility, of war and peace and economic justice, with the pressing, agonizing physical needs of men, with the plight of the underprivileged, the homeless and starving, and with the most radical contemporary rebellions against all ‘establishments’, civil and religious. ...[The] world was writing the agenda for the meeting; the right of the world to do this was largely taken for granted and Uppsala tried to read the writing.<sup>28</sup>

The theme of the conference was ‘Behold, I make all things new’ (Rev. 21:5). As Blake notes, ‘[this] was not an easy faith to hold to in 1968. There in the pulpit at the opening service was a substitute preacher because Martin Luther King, who had been invited to preach ... had fallen to an assassin’s bullet.’<sup>29</sup> The conference discussed a number of issues relating to partnership, including the churches’ role in *development*, specifically through the work of both the CWME and DICARWS, as well issues pertaining to Joint Action for Mission (JAM), the initial call for the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR), and the ecumenical sharing of personnel between churches.

As delegates gathered, the realizations concerning inherent problems in the development process discussed above were already becoming evident. In 1967, Chief S.O. Adebo wrote in the *Ecumenical Review* that ‘[colonialism] is almost dead; economic exploitation of the weak by the strong is anything but dead! Developing countries are almost always producers of primary commodities more than anything else. Primary producers are traditionally at the mercy of consumer countries. They do not always get a square deal.’<sup>30</sup> In citing reasons why the UN was failing in one of its main purposes (namely ‘the promotion of international peace and security through the promotion of international cooperation in the economic field’<sup>31</sup>) Adebo said that, although there were a number of factors, chief among these was that ‘[much] of the aid had been given for political reasons, and, in such cases, almost always to the wrong people for the wrong purposes. In other cases, the aid has been so “tied” to the export promotion programme of the donor as to lose much of its value for the

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<sup>28</sup> Norman Goodall, ‘Editorial’ in Norman Goodall (ed.) *The Uppsala Report 1968: Official Report of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Uppsala, July 4-20, 1968* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1968), p. xvii.

<sup>29</sup> Eugene Carson Blake, ‘Uppsala and Afterwards’ in Harold C. Fey (ed.) *A History of the Ecumenical Movement* Vol. 2 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), p. 413.

<sup>30</sup> Chief S.O. Adebo, ‘Rich and Poor Nations’, *Ecumenical Review* 19 (1967), p. 121. Adebo served as Nigeria’s representative to the United Nations from 1962 until 1967.

<sup>31</sup> Adebo, ‘Rich and Poor Nations’, p. 122.

recipient.<sup>32</sup> In the same issue of the *Ecumenical Review*, S.L. Parmar of the United Church in North India questioned the entire notion of Rostow's 'stages of growth' and the idea that the South simply needed to 'catch up':

One of the widely proclaimed objectives of development is 'catching up' with affluent nations. ...It's, however, not easy for developing nations to maintain higher rates of growth than developed. Limitation of resources, quantitative as well as qualitative, hampers this. Technology may be the most important factor in the equation. Here developed nations have a tremendous advantage. Since technology has its own momentum, the rate of technical progress in developed nations will be greater. This enhances their productive capacity and enables them to maintain higher growth rates.<sup>33</sup>

Parmar noted that the concept of 'catching up' was detrimental to the psyche of developing countries for a number of reasons, including the fact that growth and development were culturally conditioned terms, thus 'using the norms of other nations as criteria for development reflects an element of subservience which can undermine the self-respect and dignity of people.'<sup>34</sup>

In the documents and especially in the speeches from the assembly, one can see many of these same realizations and criticisms of Western-style development present at Uppsala. Ward spoke about the growing apathy in the North, stating that

the trouble about any discussion, these days, of the growing chasm between the prospects of developed and developing countries is the air of platitude, lassitude, and repetition that hangs over the whole subject. Ever since the Decade of Development was launched, indeed possibly as far back as President Truman's Point Four in 1949, the issues of economic and technical assistance, investment for development, trade reform, population, malnutrition and of course, the celebrated gap between rich and poor have been discussed and discussed and again discussed until, for many audiences, glazed eyes and sagging shoulders mark the overwhelming boredom which begins to appear as soon as the subject is brought up again.<sup>35</sup>

Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda also addressed the assembly, speaking to the frustration that many in the Third World felt towards the development process as defined and directed by those in power:

Some nations profess belief and faith in the U.N., but they do everything possible to frustrate, nay, to weaken and ridicule the world organization. They

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<sup>32</sup> Adebo, 'Rich and Poor Nations', p. 122.

<sup>33</sup> S.L. Parmar, 'Concern for Man in the Quest for Development', *Ecumenical Review* 19 (1967), pp. 356-357.

<sup>34</sup> Parmar, 'Concern for Man in the Quest for Development', p. 358.

<sup>35</sup> Barbara Ward, 'Rich and Poor Nations' in Albert H van den Heuvel (ed.) *Unity of Mankind: Speeches from the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Uppsala 1968* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1969), p. 33.

express desire for peace, but prepare or create conditions for war; they preach justice, but create or directly and actively assist forces of oppression and exploitation of man by man. They preach love for each other without distinction as to race or colour, but encourage hate and racialism for their own economic and political ends. They will tell you they love you and that they are willing to assist in development programmes in the name of co-operation for peace, but they will at the same time seek to exploit you. If you resist out of love for your country or people, as you are bound to, they will work for your destruction. There is, therefore, a conflict of principles and ideals in the current situation.<sup>36</sup>

When looking back on the First Decade of Development, Kaunda said that, given the above mentioned factors, 'this had not only been a "Decade of Impatience," but a "Decade of Disappointment and Disillusionment" for the newly independent nations. Nations which, though poor, are potentially rich.'<sup>37</sup> Kaunda felt that a time of reassessment was at hand, for 'the world is at a crossroad. The members of the international community have lost their direction and objectives in the flurry of world-shaking events such as decolonization, technological and other revolutions, and the new problem of race relations, with all their implications political, economic, and social.'<sup>38</sup>

One of the key concerns at Uppsala was how the church could foster development and show unity when the world in which it exists was so divided. Uppsala's answer was to state again what had already been made explicit at the CWME meeting in Mexico (1963); that mission should be directed at six continents, not three, and that this new context required new patterns of relating to one another and sharing resources. The Uppsala report stated that '[changing] political, economic and ecclesiastical circumstances demand new response and new relationships. Our understanding of the mission in six continents means that the resources of the whole Church in terms of men, money and expertise are available for the use of the whole Church. Their deployment must be determined by need and not historic relationships or traditional procedures.'<sup>39</sup> Uppsala called for churches to rethink their traditional bilateral relationships because '[the] old division between sending and receiving churches is now breaking down. More creative relationships between churches and

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<sup>36</sup> K.D. Kaunda, 'Rich and Poor Nations' in Albert H van den Heuvel (ed.) *Unity of Mankind: Speeches from the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Uppsala 1968* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1969), p. 13.

<sup>37</sup> Kaunda, 'Rich and Poor Nations', p. 18.

<sup>38</sup> Kaunda, 'Rich and Poor Nations', p. 17.

<sup>39</sup> Goodall (ed.), *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 35.

between churches and mission boards have developed. Now we must move to multilateral relations and decision making.’<sup>40</sup>

The Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (DICARWS) sought to facilitate partnerships and multilateral relationships by working with local, national, and regional church bodies on development projects. At Uppsala it was stated that ‘[the] role of the Division is to bring together these bodies, in the developed and developing countries, in a partnership of service.’<sup>41</sup> One of the key ways in which this took place was through the Special Assistance to Social Projects (SASP) program, which provided a clearinghouse for churches to seek assistance for development projects. But while the division spoke about their role in bringing bodies together in partnership, churches were separated into two categories: ‘supporting’ and ‘initiating’. And while the term ‘initiating’ was meant to inspire confidence that the projects requested were, in fact, desired by those on the receiving end of development, what actually happened was the exchanging of one set of unequal relationships for another. Instead of ‘older’ or ‘younger’, ‘sending’ or ‘receiving’, churches were now ‘supporting’ or ‘initiating’. Without questioning the motives of those involved, one can rightfully ask, ‘What had really changed?’

For the Division of World Mission and Evangelism (DWME), one way to facilitate new relationships was to focus delegates and churches on an initiative previously launched at the meeting in Mexico City, Joint Action for Mission. Unfortunately, it was realized that although ‘[some] joint action for mission had already taken place, ... the churches are still too reluctant to implement the call to joint action sounded so strongly in 1963.... Present structures obviously do not provide adequate vehicles for developing joint strategy. We must determine to find ways in which joint action can become operative.’<sup>42</sup> Since this was the case, the assembly tried to help clarify for delegates how to implement joint action, although the definition given probably served to cloud the issue even further:

JAM is not a centrally-planned programme. It is difficult to describe just when JAM takes place for, more than a methodology, it is a way of being and acting in mission together. It goes beyond cooperation, although cooperation is essential before JAM. It moves towards unity but unity does not necessarily mean that there will be JAM. In its essence it means that the churches in any

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<sup>40</sup> Goodall (ed.), *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 35.

<sup>41</sup> *Workbook for the Assembly Committees: Uppsala, Sweden* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1968), p. 48.

<sup>42</sup> Goodall (ed.), *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 35.

given area look together at the state of God's mission in this area and determine together where the crucial frontiers are.<sup>43</sup>

The report further stated, in a somewhat more clear and coherent way, that '[the] aim is that mission may take place in the name of Christ and that resources available be most effectively deployed without concern as to who "gets the credit". JAM must remain flexible since no one pattern is universally applicable in a diverse world.'<sup>44</sup> Churches were then encouraged to implement joint action everywhere they could, for it could serve to 'make a common response to Christ present and active in the world – a real partnership in mission.'<sup>45</sup> Despite the *rhetoric* (and, to be sure, the actual need for such cooperation as JAM called for), its application would continue to be problematic for at least a couple of reasons. First, if it was 'difficult to describe just when JAM takes place', then it was going to be difficult for any church or group of churches to know when, exactly, they had succeeded in joint action. And second, since the resources to be shared were still so unequally distributed, the churches in the North were going to have a hard time funding programs 'without concern for "who gets the credit"', while still seeking to excite their constituencies about mission and giving.

Despite the work being done by both DICARWS and DWME, a major obstacle to making resolutions and plans for partnership a reality was the continued confusion and overlap of responsibilities of the two divisions. Although it was stated that they were working very closely, '[the] relationship between DICARWS and DWME ... is still in flux and needs to be further clarified and formulated. In particular, ways will be sought at the Assembly to effect more efficient working arrangements between the two Divisions and prevent overlapping.'<sup>46</sup> The biggest obstacle was one that had existed from the very formation of the DWME at New Delhi in 1961; that is, that 'in many countries some of the churches founded by missions continue to benefit from the boards that mothered them and at the same time receive aid through DICARWS – a practice which is detrimental to the lively desire to work together of the Protestant churches in those countries.'<sup>47</sup> As long as churches could continue to give and receive resources bilaterally through traditional, historic

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<sup>43</sup> Goodall (ed.), *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 233.

<sup>44</sup> Goodall (ed.), *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 233.

<sup>45</sup> Goodall (ed.), *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 234.

<sup>46</sup> *Workbook for the Assembly Committees: Uppsala, Sweden*, p. 52.

<sup>47</sup> *Workbook for the Assembly Committees: Uppsala, Sweden*, p. 52.

missionary channels, the work of forming multilateral relationships and partnerships, despite calls for 'mission in six continents', would continue to be problematic.

One contribution made at Uppsala for the first time was a call for the constituent churches of the WCC to take serious and direct action to address racism. Previously, issues of economic and social justice, as well as difficulties in churches partnering together as equals, had mainly been linked to the development and economic policies of Western governments, along with the concomitant disparity in economic strength of churches. Uppsala, however, taking place during the era of decolonization, as well as only a few weeks following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., unequivocally linked these issues to race and called for churches to work towards ending racial discrimination. To start this process, the Assembly urged the WCC to 'undertake a crash programme to guide the Council and the member churches in the urgent matter of racism.'<sup>48</sup> These calls, in turn, led in 1970 to the formation of the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR). And while the PCR's initial mandate was to focus on racism as a worldwide problem, 'the coincidence of an accumulation of wealth and power in the hands of white people, as a result of their historical and economic progress during the last 400 years, made it necessary to give special attention to white racism in different parts of the world.'<sup>49</sup> Along with signaling the importance of addressing white racism, the PCR also worked to expose the economic, legal, and political structures that helped to undergird and maintain inequalities and injustice.<sup>50</sup> Since its inception, along with issues of white racism, the PCR has addressed issues concerning the liberation movements in southern Africa, land rights, women and racism, and the Indian caste system. Sjollema notes that although, in its initial stages, the PCR was quite controversial, the 'PCR's vision and commitment have now been vindicated. Indeed PCR is now often pointed to as one of the ecumenical success stories.'<sup>51</sup>

Finally, one of the main contributions of the Uppsala meeting concerned a call to examine the exchange and use of personnel in world mission. Delegates at Uppsala stated that

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<sup>48</sup> Goodall (ed.), *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 242.

<sup>49</sup> Baldwin Sjollema, 'Programme to Combat Racism' in Nicholas Lossky, *et al.* (eds.) *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2002), p. 936.

<sup>50</sup> 'Programme to Combat Racism' Introduction' in David Enderton Johnson (ed.) *Uppsala to Nairobi* (New York: Friendship Press, 1975), p. 160-161.

<sup>51</sup> Sjollema, 'Programme to Combat Racism', p. 937.

[mobilizing] the people of God for mission today means releasing them from structures that inhibit them in the Church and enabling them to open out in much more flexible ways to the world in which they live. In this world we need to meet others, across all the frontiers, in new relationships that mean both listening and responding, both giving and receiving. This necessitates ... a continuing reexamination of the structures of church life.... All must ask, not 'Have we the right structures for mission?' but 'Are we totally structured for mission?'

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A key component of the total mission structure was the sending and receiving of personnel. From the time of Whitby (1947), and especially Willingen (1952), the issue of missionaries and their roles had been discussed and debated. Uppsala stated that, if new relationships were to be formed and joint action was to be experienced, a new understanding of missionaries and their roles needed to be found: 'At present most persons going from one church to another do so because of direct contacts between two churches. An ecumenical plan for the use of the churches' manpower is now called for. The World Council of Churches ... should provide a forum for the development of such a plan, world-wide in scope.'

<sup>53</sup> What was called for was 'a machinery of cooperation both for the calling and the sending of people.'<sup>54</sup> Out of this call, a program of study entitled Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel was launched, which, along with the moratorium debate which took place concurrently, will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

In assessing the success and impact of Uppsala, there is no question that the assembly understood that the church was not only called to unity, but a unity that mattered. In addressing the assembly, a delegate from the Syrian Church of Malabar stated that '[the] unity of the Churches should not be merely the widening of the Christian ghetto or a united front to save the Establishment, but a real unity achieved through partnership in mission....'

<sup>55</sup> Likewise, delegates had no problems recognizing that the unity they sought had to take place in a divided and revolutionary world situation. As Goodall notes, '[the] whole tone and temper of Uppsala make it clear that a new age is upon us. The winds of change have become hurricanes since that famous phrase was made popular by an elder statesman.'<sup>56</sup> Instead the problems

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<sup>52</sup> Goodall (ed.), *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 35.

<sup>53</sup> Goodall (ed.), *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 264.

<sup>54</sup> Goodall (ed.), *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 263.

<sup>55</sup> M.M. Thomas, 'Issues Concerning the Life and Work of the Church in a Revolutionary World' in Albert H van den Heuvel (ed.) *Unity of Mankind: Speeches from the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Uppsala 1968* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1969), p. 93.

<sup>56</sup> Goodall, 'Editorial', p. XX

at Uppsala, even more than at past conferences, revolved around the fact that beautiful *rhetoric* and high-minded resolutions were not being followed up with concrete action. And while delegates may have thought that they were already in a hurricane, the calls for a moratorium in mission would serve to bring the unresolved issues pertaining to partnership directly to the fore.

### 8.3 The Moratorium Debate and the Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel

Since the Jerusalem meeting of the IMC in 1928, and especially after Whitby's 1948 theme of 'Partners in Obedience', ecumenical discussions had taken for granted the concept of partnership. And while the term still carried with it overtones of trusteeship, many of the recent discussions and resolutions focused on equality and mutuality. One clear example of this was the step taken in 1969 to change the title of the WCC's official missionary periodical to the *International Review of Mission* (dropping the 's'), which emphasized that churches were no longer involved in 'missions' (plural) to other places, but that all churches were involved in 'mission' (singular) everywhere. However, despite the pronouncements, resolutions, and title changes, not much had changed in the actual functioning of Global and World church relationships, and in the late 1960s and 1970s, this situation began to be directly challenged.

According to Kirk, the idea of a moratorium 'was first launched by Ivan Illich in an article in the Jesuit magazine, *America* (January 1967).'<sup>57</sup> In that article, Illich wrote that '[the] U.S. Church must face the painful side of generosity: the burden that a life gratuitously offered imposes on the recipient. The men who go to Latin America must humbly accept the possibility that they are useless or even harmful, although they give all they have.'<sup>58</sup> In 1968, Illich addressed the Conference on InterAmerican Student Projects, which sponsored American students who wanted to spend their summer break from school volunteering in Latin America. Illich told students that, despite their good intentions,

[by] definition, you cannot help being ultimately vacationing salesmen for the middle-class 'American Way of Life,' since that is really all you know. A group like this could not have developed unless a mood in the United States had supported it – the belief that any true American must share God's blessings with his poorer fellow men. The idea that every American has

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<sup>57</sup> Kirk, *What is Mission?*, p. 185.

<sup>58</sup> Ivan Illich, 'The Seamy Side of Charity', *America* 116 (January 21, 1967), p. 90.



something to give, and at all times may, can and should give it, explains why it occurred to students that they could help Mexican peasants ‘develop’ by spending a few months in their villages. ... You, like the values you carry, are the products of an American society of achievers and consumers, with its two-party system, its universal schooling, and its family-car affluence. You are ultimately – consciously or unconsciously – ‘salesmen’ for a delusive ballet in the ideas of democracy, equal opportunity and free enterprise among people who haven’t the possibility of profiting from these.<sup>59</sup>

For Illich, if students wanted to ‘make a difference’, then they should stop worrying about other countries and concentrate their efforts in the United States: ‘If you have any sense of responsibility at all, stay with your riots here at home. Work for the coming elections: You will know what you are doing, why you are doing it, and how to communicate with those to whom you speak.’<sup>60</sup>

While Illich was trying to persuade students not to go overseas in the first place, the actual call for moratorium, or a cessation in the sending and receiving of both personnel and funds, can be traced back to John Gatu, General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. Gatu, in a speech given at a mission gathering in the United States in 1971, said that ‘[in] this address I am going to argue that the time has come for the withdrawal of foreign missionaries from many parts of the Third World, that the churches of the Third World must be allowed to find their own identity, and that the continuation of the present missionary movement is a hindrance to this selfhood of the church.’<sup>61</sup> Gatu believed that, although many in the West had good intentions, their behavior instead showed that a persistent ‘Vasco da Gama mentality which went out to explore the world and help the heathen and the poor is still haunting many of the churches.’<sup>62</sup> In this light, although some were starting to call for missionaries to be withdrawn for certain time periods, such as three or five years, Gatu believed that ‘missionaries should be withdrawn, period. The reason is that we must allow God the Holy Spirit to direct our next move.... Who knows what we shall need after that period?’<sup>63</sup>

Another Christian from the World church who called for Global church missionaries to return home was the Philippine church leader Emerito Nacpil. Nacpil

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<sup>59</sup> Ivan Illich, ‘Speech at the Conference on InterAmerican Student Projects’, 1968.  
<[www.bicyclingfish.com/illich.htm](http://www.bicyclingfish.com/illich.htm)>

<sup>60</sup> Illich, ‘Speech at the Conference on InterAmerican Student Projects’, 1968.

<sup>61</sup> John Gatu, ‘Missionary, Go Home’ in Joel Underwood (ed.), *The Future of the Missionary Enterprise: IDOC No.9* (Rome: IDOC International, 1974), p. 70.

<sup>62</sup> Gatu, ‘Missionary, Go Home’, p. 71.

<sup>63</sup> Gatu, ‘Missionary, Go Home’, p. 72.

acknowledged that in some ways, the current emphasis on *development* had changed traditional missionary practice:

The desire of the churches everywhere to participate in development efforts, especially in the Third World, had led them to respond to the need for various types of service and expertise and financial aid which were somewhat different from the traditional roles of the missionary. Accordingly, the missionary was refitted as a significant contribution to the churches' participation in this effort. We are discovering, however, that this process has a way of reducing the missionary to a form of Interchurch Aid which, so far, has been sponsored under the glorified name of Joint Action for Mission. Consequently, the missionary became a short-termer and an expert or technician in specialized fields serving frontiers not quite ecclesial nor quite secular.<sup>64</sup>

Nacpil believed, however, that despite the difference in practice, the missionary's position of power, influence, and affluence was unchanged, because

[there] is one thing he can always count on..., namely the secure structure, support and efficiency of the board of missions and his right to live the standards of a developed and superior culture in a developing world in whose desire for liberation he wants to help! Thus, the modern missionary system and its affluent and efficient standards and personnel come to stand alongside the younger churches which are struggling for identity and selfhood.<sup>65</sup>

In this situation of power disparity, Nacpil said that the only way partnership could be lived out was 'a partnership between the weak upon the strong and the continued dominance of the strong over the weak, notwithstanding our efforts and protestations to the contrary. ...I believe that the present structure of modern missions is dead. And the first thing we ought to do is to eulogize it and then bury it, no matter how expensive it is to bury the dead.'<sup>66</sup> For Nacpil in Asia, as for Gatu in Africa, 'the most *missionary* service a missionary under the present system can do today ... is to go home! And the most free and vital and daring act the younger churches can do today is to stop asking for missionaries under the present system.'<sup>67</sup>

Finally, another voice in favor of a moratorium was that of Jose Miguez-Bonino. While Miguez-Bonino acknowledged and gave thanks to the missionaries

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<sup>64</sup> Emerito Nacpil, 'Mission But Not Missionaries', *International Review of Mission* 60 (July 1971), p. 358.

<sup>65</sup> Nacpil, 'Mission But Not Missionaries', p. 358.

<sup>66</sup> Nacpil, 'Mission But Not Missionaries', p. 359.

<sup>67</sup> Nacpil, 'Mission But Not Missionaries', p. 360.

from the Global church, he also said that '[we] cannot hide the fact that we don't quite believe in what we have been doing and are doing in missions.'<sup>68</sup> For him,

[the] basic fact ... is this – and the crisis we face hinges on it – we have discovered that the missionary enterprise of the last one hundred and fifty years is closely related to and interwoven with the expansion of the economic, political, and cultural influence of the Anglo-Saxon world. We from the Third World call this expansion neocolonialism or imperialism. It has been related to the idea of Manifest Destiny, civilizing enterprise, the white man's burden, and many other slogans.<sup>69</sup>

Miguez-Bonino challenged the churches of World Christianity, saying that though it might be easier to let the present relationships go unchallenged,

[for] us in the younger churches integrity is of the essence. We cannot permit ourselves to forget integrity or our own responsibility before God and before men. We cannot for the love of our brethren or for the love of God let anybody or anything stand in the way of our taking on our own shoulders our responsibility. If, in order to do that, we must say to you, our friends, 'Stay home,' we will do so because before God we have this grave responsibility of our integrity.<sup>70</sup>

Not surprisingly, for mission leaders from the Global churches the call for a moratorium was a signal for real soul searching, albeit without having to actually recall missionaries or sever ties with partner churches. Gerald Anderson wrote that, while there was merit in much of what Gatu, Nacpil, and others were saying, '[surely] their approach is too shortsighted and simplistic for an exceedingly complex set of historical circumstances. We cannot responsibly solve the accumulated problems of nearly 200 years of missionary relationships by suddenly going into isolation; nor will the New Testament allow us to do so.'<sup>71</sup> Anderson, worried about the effects of a moratorium on the Global churches, believed that if instituted, it 'would serve to immobilize the churches of the West in relation to mission in these areas. It would limit us to mission where we are – an altogether unbiblical concept – and negate the concept of mission as the whole church bringing the whole gospel to the whole world.'<sup>72</sup> Instead, while agreeing that many of the issues raised by Gatu and others were legitimate, Anderson said that 'the need to review and re-evaluate present

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<sup>68</sup> Jose Miguez-Bonino, 'The Present Crisis in Mission' in Joel Underwood (ed.), *The Future of the Missionary Enterprise: IDOC No.9* (Rome: IDOC International, 1974), p. 75.

<sup>69</sup> Miguez-Bonino, 'The Present Crisis in Mission', p. 75.

<sup>70</sup> Miguez-Bonino, 'The Present Crisis in Mission', p. 78.

<sup>71</sup> Gerald H. Anderson, 'A Moratorium on Missionaries?', *The Christian Century* (January 16, 1974), p. 44.

<sup>72</sup> Anderson, 'A Moratorium on Missionaries?', p. 44.

structures and strategies does not *suspend* the Christian mandate for world mission....<sup>73</sup>

In like manner, R. Pierce Beaver spends most of his book *The Missionary Between the Times* acknowledging all that is wrong with Global church mission. However, his answer for a way forward was to say that, although '[tarred] with the stick of Western origin and support, the American and European missionary in close partnership with African and Asian brethren must try to become recognized as the representative of a supranational universal community of believers in which peoples of East, West, and the Third World unite....'<sup>74</sup> For most Global church leaders, it seemed that while they agreed that there were serious problems with Global/World church relations, they disagreed with Nacpil's assessment that 'the present structure of modern missions is dead.' They felt that the only way forward was not to withdraw, but to continue to engage and seek out ways of working together.

Of course, some church leaders in the World churches disagreed with these arguments. Nacpil noted that the call for a moratorium 'does not ... mean the end of mission. It may well be that mission, which is essential to the being of the Church, will rise to new life in a new form consistent with the selfhood of the younger churches....'<sup>75</sup> In like manner, Castro wrote that what was being called for was 'a moratorium *for* Mission, never moratorium *of* mission.'<sup>76</sup> Despite these assurances, what some leaders in the Global church like Anderson could not understand, or refused to understand, was the essence of the argument put forward by those calling for the moratorium: unless the issue of power was addressed, no amount of dialogue or reassessment would significantly alter the inequalities inherent in Global/World church relations.

In this situation of conflict and varied opinion on a way forward, the WCC undertook a study, first recommended at Uppsala in 1968, on the Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel (ESP). The study was a joint project of both DICARWS and DWME and a number of meetings were held between 1970 and 1979. At the first ESP meeting, held in Cartigny, Switzerland, many questions were asked: 'Why does the

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<sup>73</sup> Anderson, 'A Moratorium on Missionaries?', p. 45.

<sup>74</sup> R. Pierce Beaver, *The Missionary Between the Times* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1968), p. 163. For a similar response, cf. James A. Scherer, *Missionary, Go Home!: A Reappraisal of the Christian World Mission* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964).

<sup>75</sup> Nacpil, 'Mission But Not Missionaries', p. 360.

<sup>76</sup> Emilio Castro, 'Bangkok, the New Opportunity', *International Review of Mission* 62 (April 1973), p. 143.

flow of missionaries from North America and Europe continue? Are the churches and national Christian councils of Asia, Africa, and Latin America conniving at the flow for reasons which are not in the best interests of God's mission in their lands? Are mission boards and requesting churches ready to re-consider their practices for strategic as well as tactical reasons?'<sup>77</sup> The report also acknowledged that '[at] present the greatest movement of persons is from the rich churches and countries to the poor.... This makes it difficult for a church to use its freedom of decision and is apt to distort relationships between the "sending" and "receiving" bodies.'<sup>78</sup> While the CWME Bangkok meeting, held in 1973, will be discussed in the next section, it is important to note that the ESP, as well as the issue of moratorium, were major topics of discussion at the assembly. Bangkok noted that

[those] who have money have the power to dominate and to make decisions affecting others. ESP's concern is to shift power from the powerful to the powerless. Churches and regional councils are powerless to take basic decisions about their projects and priorities in mission when they are dependent on money from the West. A significant way of transferring power is to separate the decisions about money from the decision about personnel.<sup>79</sup>

The report then urged 'missionary agencies to examine critically their involvement as part of patterns of political and economic domination, and to re-evaluate the role of personnel and finance at their disposal in the light of that examination.'<sup>80</sup> Bangkok, taking place as it did in the first few years of the moratorium debate, took a positive view of its implications and recommended that churches look seriously at it as 'possibly offering the breakthrough which we are looking for.'<sup>81</sup>

By 1979, the ESP study group was able to publish 'Some Principles of Personnel Sharing', listing principles which became

increasingly accepted by both sending and receiving agencies: a) The work of the expatriate personnel should be an integral part of and the direct responsibility of the programme/project carrier, not of the sending agency; b) The budget for the employment of all personnel, including expatriates, should be included in the project or church budget; c) All personnel, including expatriates, should be employed and paid by the programme/project carrier, according to criteria and terms established by the agency; and d) Donors in

<sup>77</sup> 'The Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel', *International Review of Mission* 59 (October 1970), p. 444.

<sup>78</sup> 'The Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel', p. 445.

<sup>79</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973: Minutes and Report of the Assembly of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1973), p. 24; hereafter cited as *Bangkok Assembly 1973*.

<sup>80</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 25.

<sup>81</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 24.

other countries wishing to contribute personnel or funds for the project should agree to these principles.<sup>82</sup>

It is important to note that during these years, a few mission agencies undertook radical structural changes to try and share power, money, and decision making among all partners involved. One example is the Communauté Evangélique d'Action Apostolique (CEVAA), which formed in 1971 'out of the Joint Apostolic Action conducted by the churches associated with the work of the Paris Mission....'<sup>83</sup> According to Samuel Ada, former General Secretary of CEVAA, '[the] founders were not content with a few cosmetic retouches to what was there. They aimed at a thorough-going reform to correspond to the missionary demands of the church today.'<sup>84</sup> Ada notes that while CEVAA was founded in 1971, the work involved in changing its structures and relationships was not quick or easy. A study group, made up entirely of Europeans from France and Switzerland, brought an earlier proposal in 1967. However, '[the] projected structures were turned down. The African, Malagasy, Melanesian and Polynesian delegates pointed out that they had no intention of joining a European body set up by France and Switzerland. They wanted to share the whole process of the establishment of an international body where their responsibilities would be fully engaged.'<sup>85</sup>

As a result, another study group was created, representing not only Europeans but all overseas partners. After a two year discernment process, the new structures were presented to the churches involved in 1970 and ratified in 1971. From its conception, Ada says that CEVAA was to function in radically different ways than its predecessor, the Paris Mission Society. While the Paris Mission had been the principle sending agency of funds and personnel to partners overseas, with CEVAA '[the] community is not a "single centre" unifying the churches. It functions as a "multi-centre"; that is, it is the place where many relations uniting the churches come together.'<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> *Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel: A Dossier of Experiences* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1979), p. 5.

<sup>83</sup> Victor Rakotoarimanana, 'CEVAA – A Response to the Gospel's Demands', *International Review of Mission* 62 (October 1973), p. 408.

<sup>84</sup> Samuel K. Ada, 'CEVAA: From a Missionary Society to a Community of Churches in Mission' in *International Review of Mission* 76 (October 1987), p. 514.

<sup>85</sup> Ada, 'CEVAA: From a Missionary Society to a Community of Churches in Mission', p. 515.

<sup>86</sup> Ada, 'CEVAA: From a Missionary Society to a Community of Churches in Mission', p. 516.

Another example of radical restructuring took place in 1977 with the Council for World Mission (CWM), an organization of churches connected historically through the London Missionary Society. According to Barrie Scopes, there were a number of pressures on organizations to change the way they functioned. Along with calls by some African church leaders for a moratorium, there was also the example of CEVAA: 'During the 1970s more attention was being given to the ecumenical sharing of resources, and the need for each church to be both a giver and a receiver. Two of CWM's associated churches, the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM) and the United Church of Zambia, already belonged to CEVAA.'<sup>87</sup> Due to these pressures and with the example of CEVAA, a consultation was held in Singapore in 1975 to discuss possible changes to the LMS mission structures. And while the possibility of a moratorium was discussed, in the end '[the] consultation ... came to the firm conclusion that the way forward was "Mutuality, not Moratorium" in an organization where there would be genuine sharing and participation by all, with decision-making the responsibility of all together.'<sup>88</sup> According to the booklet that was produced by the consultation, what was aimed for was a radical restructuring of power distribution:

The Consultation came to the unanimous view that as now constituted the Council represents only a very restricted understanding of the missionary task (from the west to the developing nations of Africa, Asia, The Pacific, and the Caribbean); that it perpetuates the relationship of donor and recipient; and that it fails to give adequate place to the talents of every church in the one co-operative enterprise. So the major recommendation for the Consultation was that CWM should make a thorough and urgent attempt to reform its structures so that all the associated churches might share fully and responsibly in the one missionary task.<sup>89</sup>

The findings of the Singapore consultation were forwarded to the churches involved, and in 1977 the changes in structures were ratified, offering the ecumenical world another example in sharing power and resources among churches.

As Funkschmidt notes,

both of these organizations, and others like them, changed their structures to allow partner churches in the South full participation in all decision-making processes by allocating to them a majority of seats in the councils, executive committees, etc. Since this includes full control over current budgets and

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<sup>87</sup> <sup>87</sup> Barrie Scopes, 'The Shaping of the Council for World Mission' in *International Review of Mission* 76 (October 1987), p. 454.

<sup>88</sup> Scopes, 'The Shaping of the Council for World Mission', p. 454.

<sup>89</sup> *Sharing in One World Mission* (London: CWM, 1975), pp. 3-4.

assets of these mission organizations, one can rightly speak of a communion of goods, even though the individual member churches remain vastly differently resourced in financial terms.<sup>90</sup>

While the successes and failures of these more radical restructurings will be discussed in the next chapter (see below, pp. 358-360), it is enough to say here that, as Sang Jung Park notes, while no ideal model or example was found, these efforts do show ‘a gradually increasing number of experiments in personnel sharing.’<sup>91</sup> Whatever else it did, the calls for a moratorium and the processes that led to the ESP studies, increased the pressure on churches to change their traditional, bilateral relationships and seek experiments with more multilateral ones in which power was less concentrated in the churches of Global Christianity.

When looking at the effects of the moratorium debate, it must be noted that, in the end, very few Global churches recalled missionaries.<sup>92</sup> One of the main issues was that, despite persistent calls for a suspension in relations, the majority of those in the churches, both Global and World, were not ready or willing to take this drastic step. As Anderson rightly noted, ‘the overwhelming weight of opinion in the Third World, and in the “First” World too, is very much on the side of continued missionary presence. Even Mr. Gatu admits that “not many” African church leaders agree with his moratorium proposal. Nor do leaders of “younger churches” elsewhere.’<sup>93</sup> An example of this is Bishop de Carvalho of Angola, who believed that ‘[autonomy] will come in the course of time. What we need today is partnership, not paternalism. Concepts such as these: churches overseas, mission fields, our mission churches in the third or fourth worlds, mother churches, etc., must cease to exist, if we are to establish a truly Christian community, in which there are no givers and receivers, no senders and welcomers, but partners.’<sup>94</sup>

However, another reason why missionaries were not recalled had, unfortunately, nothing to do with the World churches per se, but was instead tied

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<sup>90</sup> Kai Michael Funkschmidt, ‘Partnership Between Unequals – Mission Impossible?’, *International Review of Mission* 91 (July 2002), p. 397.

<sup>91</sup> Sang Jung Park, ‘ESP – Through A Kaleidoscope’, *International Review of Mission* 62 (October 1973), p. 46.

<sup>92</sup> Kirk notes that exceptions to this include ‘the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in the UK and the United Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church of America in the USA.’ Kirk, *What is Mission?*, p. 267.

<sup>93</sup> Anderson, ‘A Moratorium on Missionaries?’, p. 45. Some missionaries were asked to stay by church leaders from the World churches because, in actual fact, their relationships were quite good; cf., Bernard Spong, *Sticking Around* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2006), pp. 137-146.

<sup>94</sup> J.M. de Carvalho, ‘The Dawning of Partnership’, *All Africa Council of Churches Bulletin* 9 (1976), pp. 42-43.



directly to issues of the Global church *home base*. As Kirk notes, '[the] fact of the matter (seen by many as a sad reflection of an inadequate view of mission) is that without at least a token number of missionaries going overseas from the West it would have been hard for Churches and agencies to maintain financial support at acceptable levels.'<sup>95</sup> Despite these issues, Anderson notes that the moratorium debate served an important function in the evolution of Global/World church relations, for out of it came 'greater recognition that the sending and receiving of personnel and funds are joint responsibilities, and that traditional relationships, structures, and attitudes which perpetuated dependency had to change for the sake of mission and the selfhood of the churches.'<sup>96</sup> While that assessment is no doubt true, it is telling that at the end of the 1970s, René Padilla could still note that,

[in] actual fact, Whitby's call to partnership in obedience is still as relevant as when it was first issued. Many of its recommendations have not yet been implemented by a number of agencies involved in missionary work. Witness the growing numerical strength of North American Protestant missions (almost wholly dependent on North American personnel, leadership, and finances) after World War II, and the persistent separation of 'foreign missions' and 'local' churches' around the world. Witness the prevalence of policies and patterns of missionary work which assumes that the leadership of Christian missions lies in the hands of Western strategists and specialists. Witness the schools of 'world mission' based in the West, with no participation of faculty members from the Third World. Witness, finally, the frequency with which an older church (or, more often, a missionary board) in the West maintains a one-way relationship with a younger church (which may or may not be regarded as independent). As long as this situation endures, partnership is no more than a myth.<sup>97</sup>

While the study and findings of the Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel were a step forward in the relationships between Global and World churches, many of the issues that led to calls for a moratorium would continue to be problematic and debated throughout this time and after.

#### 8.4 The Bangkok Meeting of the CWME (1973)

When the Bangkok Assembly of the CWME met, '[three] hundred and twenty-six people from fifty-nine countries came together for ten days to seek new

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<sup>95</sup> Kirk, *What is Mission?*, p. 186.

<sup>96</sup> Gerald H. Anderson, 'Moratorium' in Nicholas Lossky, *et al.* (eds.) *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2002), p. 798.

<sup>97</sup> René Padilla, 'The Fullness of Mission', *Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research* 3 (January 1, 1979), pp. 7.

meaning in this old word of faith, salvation. The setting was Asia and the largest group of participants were from Asia, Africa, and Latin America.<sup>98</sup> When discussing the theme 'Salvation Today', Webb notes that 'discussion was impossible without remembering the B52 bombers taking off from their bases nearby to unleash hell on North Vietnam in the name of the salvation of Western civilization.'<sup>99</sup> In this context, Duncan also writes that, while one could not rightly talk about salvation without some sense of celebration, 'one was also very conscious of the grim realities of the world in which Salvation is to be celebrated and proclaimed. A great number of those participating are living daily with oppression, injustice, poverty, and privation.'<sup>100</sup> Because of these realities, Bangkok emphasized that there should be no dichotomy between personal salvation and seeking salvation through the challenging and changing of unjust structures of oppression and injustice.<sup>101</sup> Webb notes that, throughout the discussions,

Asian, African, and Latin American voices kept insistently calling us back to this concept of the wholeness of our message. Refusing to be sidetracked into European academic theological debates, voices from the third world thundered their emphasis that salvation must relate to the whole of life, to a man's personal identity and a people's political destiny, to a person's private sins and a nation's institutionalized guilt, to a child's cry for bread and a teenager's search for meaning. Somehow our ears must be opened to hear the many and varied cries for salvation that are for real all round us.<sup>102</sup>

In this light, Bangkok officially stated that 'the personal, social, individual and corporate aspects of salvation are so inter-related that they are inseparable.'<sup>103</sup>

Focusing on Jesus' Manifesto in Luke 4:18, the conference defined salvation as 'a comprehensive wholeness in this divided life.'<sup>104</sup>

One of Bangkok's topics continued to be how churches could partner to further *development*. Because many in the West benefited from the present systems

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<sup>98</sup> Pauline Webb, *Salvation Today* (London: SCM Press, 1974), p. 40.

<sup>99</sup> Webb, *Salvation Today*, p. 45.

<sup>100</sup> D.E. Duncan, *Salvation Today* (Christchurch: National Council of Churches in New Zealand, 1973), p. 1.

<sup>101</sup> Although this paper deals exclusively with how partnership has been understood and lived by Protestant 'mainline' churches, it is important to note that many churches that are today considered 'conservative evangelical' were formerly part of the WCC and its structures. While various theological disagreements had been building for a number of years, Bangkok's definition of 'comprehensive salvation' was the final and deciding factor in the evangelicals forming a separate world mission body, the Lausanne movement. As Günther notes, Bangkok 'set the seal on the evangelicals' withdrawal from the ecumenical mission movement.' Günther, 'The History and Significance of World Mission Conferences in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century', p. 532.

<sup>102</sup> Webb, *Salvation Today*, pp. 50-51.

<sup>103</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 87.

<sup>104</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 88.

and unjust structures, it was felt that people and churches 'were often guilty of accepting the status quo.... In the discussion it was often asserted that mission expansion was closely related to the exploitative nature of the capitalist system. Even today many of our missionary and evangelistic efforts are exclusively concerned about individual salvation and remain unwilling to deal with the causes of social injustice.'<sup>105</sup> Bangkok believed that one of the ways that churches could be involved in development was in national planning: 'Christians must help to interpret a new quality of life for people and see themselves playing a creative and prophetic role to change society. In many countries, Christians may be able to participate in national planning by assuming the form of a servant and yet activating change in small but significant ways.'<sup>106</sup> While none of the findings was very radical, the understanding that salvation touches all aspects of life, including development, was important in that it further perpetuated, for both good and ill, the Global churches involvement in the development of the South.

Because of the significance of the moratorium debate and the questions surrounding Global/World church relationships previously discussed, one of the significant issues at Bangkok was the actual practice of partnership. Bangkok noted that, while the Mexico City meeting had talked about 'mission in six continents', 'now the new era has definitely come to be. The particular structure of missions inaugurated by the Portuguese ... and taken over by Protestant missions later on has come to its end. Missions in that era were characterized by the historic circumstances of Western expansion and dominance. It was further characterized by a one-way traffic from the West to other parts of the world.'<sup>107</sup> The reasons for the emergence of this new era were that

the historic circumstances have changed. Political independence has changed the outlook of millions of people. Yet the factor that has brought the new era of mission is not only political. It is also a factor of church history. Two things happened. First the churches 'planted' by missions became independent and by entering massively into the ecumenical movement they made it really ecumenical. This is a matter of pride and joy. Secondly the churches in the West have become more and more mission-conscious. This is also a reason for rejoicing. But at the same time we have to acknowledge that this causes some problems. These churches become mission-oriented at a moment when the missions they have begun actively to support have to

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<sup>105</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 93.

<sup>106</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 94.

<sup>107</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 68.

completely re-structure themselves to meet the new situation. Thus missionary potential has to be deployed in a completely new way.<sup>108</sup>

Given this history, Bangkok was incredibly blunt in its analysis of the issues.

First, Bangkok admitted that

[the] issues we are dealing with are not new. We are working on an old agenda about which much has been said but too little has been done. We could produce a fine report by simply lifting paragraphs from the reports of previous world and regional meetings. Our basic problem is how to break free from the frustrating cycle of repeated statements which are received, filed and not acted upon.<sup>109</sup>

The conference also acknowledged that “Partnership in mission” remains an empty slogan. Even where autonomy and equal partnership have been achieved in a formal sense, the actual dynamics are such as to perpetuate relationships of domination and dependence.’<sup>110</sup> As Günther notes, Bangkok understood that despite any advances made in partnership, relationships had been, for the most part, left unchanged: ‘Since Whitby, the talk had been about ‘partners in obedience, but what did things look like in reality? Were not things still determined, as in the past, by the Western donors?’<sup>111</sup>

In recognizing this fact, Bangkok challenged past efforts at devolution, noting that

[the] very idea of power – conceived as the authority to administer funds and deploy personnel – is alien to a true understanding of the Church. The simple transfer of power from one church to another is not the answer. The emergence of ‘power élites’ either in sending or receiving churches distorts the life of the church and hinders the fulfillment of its mission. What we must seek is rather a mature relationship between churches. Basic to such a relationship is mutual commitment to participate in Christ’s mission to the world.<sup>112</sup>

Since these unjust power relations affected and hindered authentic relationships between all churches, Bangkok could rightly state that ‘[it] is not only the traditionally receiving churches that need ... liberation. Sending churches are equally in need of it. Each church has a responsibility to help the other towards a full realization of liberty in Christ.’<sup>113</sup>

Incidentally, in light of the call for mature relationships, it is important to note that one of the main ways in which the CWME had attempted to facilitate and foster

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<sup>108</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, pp. 68-69.

<sup>109</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 104.

<sup>110</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 104.

<sup>111</sup> Günther, ‘The History and Significance of World Mission Conferences in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century’, p. 531.

<sup>112</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 104.

<sup>113</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 105.

partnership, namely JAM, was unfortunately still proving ineffective. At Uppsala it was noted that many churches were not cooperating in joint mission, and at Bangkok, the situation had not changed significantly. The report simply noted that 'at the local level there had been a reluctance to come together for mission.... Unless people are committed to work together, personnel and funds, both foreign and local, will be ineffective.'<sup>114</sup> Much had been said concerning JAM, and Bangkok could only add the recommendation that 'mission agencies ... restructure themselves, in consultation with their partner churches, in such a way as to provide for a mature relationship, to make possible effective programmes for mission and to strengthen ecumenical relations.'<sup>115</sup>

Finally, despite protestations concerning the call for a moratorium, Bangkok readily admitted that all churches were at fault and that, in certain situations, a moratorium could be beneficial:

The whole debate ... springs from our failure to relate to one another in a way which does not dehumanize. The moratorium would enable the receiving church to find its identity, set its own priorities and discover within its own fellowship the resources to carry out its authentic mission. It would also enable the sending church to rediscover its identity in the context of the contemporary situation. It is not proposed that the moratorium be applied in every country.... In some situations, however, the moratorium proposal, painful though it may be for both sides, may be the best means of resolving a present dilemma and advancing the mission of Christ.<sup>116</sup>

There are a number of critical issues in assessing the importance of Bangkok and its findings. First, as Castro states, Bangkok made it clear that it was

no longer possible to make a clear-cut distinction between the foreign missionary enterprise and home missionary activities. In the interrelated world of today we all belong together. The mission of the churches in the United States of America has more importance for the situation of the church in many countries of the world than the actual sending of missionaries from these particular churches.<sup>117</sup>

On this issue, one of the main problems would continue to be whether, as Kirk stated earlier, the traditional *home base* of missions would continue to give support in light of the new ecumenical paradigm, 'mission in six continents'. Castro also points to another critical finding at Bangkok; namely, that for 'mission in six continents' to be

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<sup>114</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 22.

<sup>115</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 22.

<sup>116</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 106.

<sup>117</sup> Castro, 'Bangkok, The New Opportunity', pp. 140-141.

a reality, then all churches must be willing to receive as well as send. Again, the report recognized that many churches, especially those of Global Christianity, might react negatively to this, so it was recommended that '[churches] that have a long tradition of "sending" their missionaries elsewhere need to take deliberate steps to accustom their members to the idea that without the presence and witness of the foreigner they themselves are deficient.'<sup>118</sup>

When judging the significance and lasting impact of Bangkok, Bosch notes that

the euphoric sense of a breakthrough which the delegates to the Bangkok Assembly had experienced at the time was deceptive. The ringing statements about the meaning of salvation actually raised more questions than they answered. This was further underscored when, during the past two decades, we have become conscious of the 'limits of growth'. Unchecked technological development has become nonsensical, since earth's nonrenewable resources are being exhausted, while the rich become richer and the poor poorer. Even if humans could live by bread alone, there is simply no longer enough bread for all because of structures which appear to be unalterable.<sup>119</sup>

While in hindsight Bosch's assessment is no doubt true, in the immediate aftermath of the conference there was much hope that, despite the breakaway by some evangelical churches, Bangkok could serve as a step towards the realization of mutuality and partnership. At the closing of the conference, Castro noted that

Bangkok is pleading not for less salvation but for more salvation. Bangkok is an invitation to look forward in the joy of those who share a common knowledge of God who in Jesus Christ liberates us and invites us to see and participate in his liberating action all over the world. There are many matters to be discussed. Many problems yet remain: Where is the power to act in the world today? ...How do we implement structures of real partnership in such a divided world? How can we be preachers of the gospel of reconciliation without recognizing the deep divisions among mankind? ...But one thing we know: God acts always in the world to liberate it and we, through the acceptance of Jesus Christ, have been incorporated into that missionary action. Let us fulfill our vocation in daily obedience, hoping that God will open new ways for our testimony as we walk with him.<sup>120</sup>

#### 8.5 Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches – Nairobi (1975)

As the Nairobi Assembly opened under the theme 'Jesus Christ Frees and Unites', delegates understood that the world in which they lived was changing,

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<sup>118</sup> *Bangkok Assembly 1973*, p. 101.

<sup>119</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 398.

<sup>120</sup> Castro, 'Bangkok, The New Opportunity', p. 143.

becoming more and more divided and chaotic. It was noted that since the last assembly at Uppsala there had been an

increasing impatience and unrest of peoples seeking political and racial liberation, the spread of militaristic governments; the violation of human rights and the abuse of power everywhere; the ruthless suppression of efforts at people's participation in changing social and economic structures for a humane existence.... The growing pollution of the environment, the population explosion, the world monetary crisis, the world crisis in food and other commodities, the widening gap between rich and poor within and between nations have converged to create a situation which threatens the very future of international society.<sup>121</sup>

Potter hoped that, as delegates met, they would be able to face these crises 'head on with open eyes, deploying all the resources of vision, imagination, reason and skills ... in order to understand and interpret the dangers in their full reality and to be free to discover and attempt new ways of overcoming them in cooperation rather than confrontation.'<sup>122</sup> There had also been changes within the WCC in the years since Uppsala, as 39 churches were added as members or associate members. It was noted that 'among the new Member Churches, 17 come from Africa, 12 from Asia and Australasia, 11 from Latin America and the Caribbean.... Thus the extension of the constituency into the Southern hemisphere has continued, with more than half the total members of the World Council coming from this area.'<sup>123</sup>

Because of the chaotic world situation, the relative balance between representatives from various parts of the world, and just maybe because delegates were surrounded by poverty and sprawling slums, Nairobi was able to raise questions about subjects necessary for mutuality and partnership to take place; suffering and solidarity. Nairobi noted that '[structures] of injustice and struggles of liberation pose a formidable challenge to the Church today.'<sup>124</sup> In this light, questions were asked of churches: 'Is there readiness for suffering in our churches today? Or are our church structures built for our own protection and security and have they therefore become barriers which prevent us from sharing suffering in obedience to Christ and from

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<sup>121</sup> Philip Potter, 'Introduction' in David Enderton Johnson (ed.) *Uppsala to Nairobi* (New York: Friendship Press, 1975), p. 16.

<sup>122</sup> Potter, 'Introduction', *Uppsala to Nairobi*, p. 17.

<sup>123</sup> Philip Potter, 'The World Council of Churches: A Fellowship ... But What Kind of Fellowship?' in David Enderton Johnson (ed.) *Uppsala to Nairobi* (New York: Friendship Press, 1975), p. 24.

<sup>124</sup> 'Structures of Injustice and Struggles for Liberation' in David Paton (ed.) *Breaking Barriers: Nairobi 1975* (London: SPCK, 1976), p. 101.

receiving or reflecting God's redeeming love?'<sup>125</sup> Churches and Christians were encouraged that those 'who suffer together for the cause of justice and liberation find a deep experience of community with each other and with Christ. This community transcends differences of ideology, class, and Christian tradition.'<sup>126</sup>

Although not directly mentioned in the Nairobi report, by emphasizing 'suffering together', the way was opened up to directly frame interchurch relations on a much more biblical model that had only been hinted at before: *koinonia* or 'partaking together'.<sup>127</sup> Nairobi recommended '[that] whenever any church is passing through suffering, the other churches must find ways of expressing solidarity with them in their suffering, both by prayer and visitation, and by courageous action in publishing the facts and making appropriate protest.'<sup>128</sup> As we will see, at conferences in the future the focus on suffering, solidarity, and *koinonia* would be used more and more to frame the partnership discussion.

One of the main issues discussed at Nairobi, as at Uppsala, was *development*. Due to the growing gap between the rich and poor, Uppsala had called for new responses and new initiatives to tackle development problems. Out of this call, a consultation was held in the Swiss town of Montreux at which the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (CCPD) was formed with the mandate to 'co-ordinate the various [church] efforts and to take further measures to promote the development concern.'<sup>129</sup> However, even after five years of existence, the CCDP reported to the assembly that

today, more than ever before, we find it difficult to articulate our understanding of the development concept and consequently to decide on the patterns of participation in the development process. In the past few years there have been many conscious efforts to give human development a conceptual clarity that it lacked, but the relation between the concept and reality seems to become more diffused and more evasive. The uncertainties and ambiguities resulting from this situation are made more pronounced because of the few certainties that cannot be evaded: that after two decades of efforts to remove poverty and reduce inequality there are today more people in the grips of dire poverty and the gap between the rich and poor has widened; ... that in the spaceship earth the expenditure on armaments is steadily mounting; that in numbers mankind is continuing to grow at an unprecedented

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<sup>125</sup> 'Structures of Injustice and Struggles for Liberation', p. 101.

<sup>126</sup> 'Structures of Injustice and Struggles for Liberation', p. 101.

<sup>127</sup> Kirk, *What is Mission?*, p. 188.

<sup>128</sup> 'What Unity Requires' in David Paton (ed.) *Breaking Barriers: Nairobi 1975* (London: SPCK, 1976), p. 67.

<sup>129</sup> 'Human Development: Ambiguities of Power, Technology, and Quality of Life' in David Paton (ed.) *Breaking Barriers: Nairobi 1975* (London: SPCK, 1976), p. 122..



rate. In the quest for development, thus, we find ourselves caught in a pensive mood, raising many questions and finding few answers.<sup>130</sup>

Nairobi also observed that '[a] new aspect in the development debate today is that not only the methods of development, but also the goals of development are being brought into question ... as it is related to a meaningful life.'<sup>131</sup> Into this confusion and uncertainty, Nairobi was still able to make some recommendations. It was acknowledged that, for those involved in development directly, '[the] time has come to exercise discriminating choice in favour of those technologies which conform to simplicity in design, are easily maintained, which reduce the overall impact on the environment, and are compatible with indigenous materials and culture'<sup>132</sup>; what is today referred to as 'appropriate technology'. It was also admitted that 'in many situations the primary responsibility for the development process will be exercised by secular bodies. The role of Christians and the churches will be to assist in the definition, validation, and articulation of just political, economic, and social objectives and in translating them into action.'<sup>133</sup> Even before Uppsala, church and national leaders from the South such as President Kaunda of Zambia were raising questions about both the methods and goals of development. At Nairobi, the evidence supporting their cause was overwhelming and churches were challenged to take critical and prophetic stands, seeking to make development benefit and be culturally appropriate for those on the receiving end.

When looking specifically at the topic of partnership, Nairobi added little that was new. Like Bangkok, when seeking relationships of mutuality, '[the] question of power was recognized as basic.'<sup>134</sup> While the need for new models of mission such as CEVAA was also called for, Nairobi reflected sadly that 'the models are not many, and the problem is an intractable one.'<sup>135</sup> Nairobi also acknowledged that, although the concept of 'mission in six continents' had been around for over a decade, most church members from the *home base* had still not grasped changes in international mission. In this light, it was agreed that '[the] shift from one emphasis to the other calls for a shift in the type of educational material needed by the churches to make

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<sup>130</sup> 'Human Development: Ambiguities of Power, Technology, and Quality of Life', p. 122.

<sup>131</sup> 'Human Development: Ambiguities of Power, Technology, and Quality of Life', p. 125.

<sup>132</sup> 'Human Development: Ambiguities of Power, Technology, and Quality of Life', p. 125.

<sup>133</sup> 'Human Development: Ambiguities of Power, Technology, and Quality of Life', p. 123.

<sup>134</sup> 'Report of Faith and Witness' in David Enderton Johnson (ed.) *Uppsala to Nairobi* (New York: Friendship Press, 1975), p. 89.

<sup>135</sup> 'Report of Faith and Witness', p. 88.

their members aware of the universal as well as the immediately local scope of mission.<sup>136</sup> Lastly, when looking towards the future, the hope was expressed that ‘relationships between the churches must be developed in the coming years to a degree of maturity which will allow the world-wide ecumenical community to participate in mission together with greater integrity and freedom.’<sup>137</sup> It was recommended that

concerted efforts be made to share personnel and finance in ways which promote both the proper freedom and the proper interdependence of all the churches. This sharing must be mutual. True sharing within a mature partnership means that churches are free to use personnel and financial aid in accordance with their own priorities; they can also decline any support which they feel would not further the cause of the gospel in their area.<sup>138</sup>

While ‘concerted efforts’ were recommended, no concrete solutions were offered as to how this dream could become a reality, although this resolution led to the study on the ‘Ecumenical Sharing of Resources’ (ESR) which was launched in 1976 as the WCC sought guidelines for establishing mature ecumenical relationships.<sup>139</sup>

While not much new was said directly relating to partnership, Nairobi did contribute to the continuing discussion. By focusing on the churches’ involvement in suffering with and on behalf of others, the language of fellowship and *koinonia* became important when talking about interchurch relations. By admitting that Western style development was not working, the door was opened to other voices and other ways of overcoming poverty. However, Jackson notes that one of the biggest contributions of Nairobi could be found simply in the act of meeting: ‘This meeting of religious leaders of the world was a concrete illustration and a clear demonstration of the fact that in this present and chaotic age all was not lost. In spite of the divisions, the confusions, and the conflicts among nations, there were still elements of friendship across national lines based on faith in God, in one’s fellowman, and in the life and message of Jesus Christ.’<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> ‘Report of Faith and Witness’, p. 89.

<sup>137</sup> ‘Report of Faith and Witness’, p. 90.

<sup>138</sup> ‘What Unity Requires’, p. 67.

<sup>139</sup> The ESR study ultimately led to a world consultation in El Escorial (1987). The history and findings of ESR are discussed later in this chapter (see below, pp. 324-333).

<sup>140</sup> J.H. Jackson, *Nairobi: A Joke, A Junket, or A Journey?* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1976), p.xvii.

## 8.6 The Melbourne Meeting of the CWME (1980)

As delegates met in Melbourne, they continued to focus, as Nairobi had done, on issues of power and powerlessness. It was said that, although colonialism had ended for the vast majority of the world's peoples, in many cases

[one] power has been removed and seven others have come in. Large parts of the developing world have become an arena and victims of a struggle between super-powers.... Some countries have suffered military occupation.... Others experienced an onslaught from transnational companies who, with local elites, have established new centres of power that now encircle the globe. Patterns of technological and bureaucratic development produce benefits that accrue to everybody except the poor.<sup>141</sup>

However, Melbourne not only understood the divided world in which mission took place, but also noted how the church, in many cases, benefited from this: 'We ... have had to face the fact that the churches' complicity with the colonial powers, so frequently condemned in the past, has been carried over and continues to the present day. In the consumer societies now flourishing in the rich centres in many lands, good Christian people and others are now, with "cruel innocence", eating up the whole world.'<sup>142</sup> This fact mitigated any chance of realizing partnership as solidarity and equality, and it was hoped that Melbourne could assist the churches, especially those of Global Christianity to think critically about their role in mission and their relationships with each other. As Potter noted, although efforts had been made in the past towards mutuality, 'we have not got very far in the ecumenical sharing of resources and in our partnership in the Gospel. The power of money and other resources has prevailed. It is our earnest hope that this conference will carry us further along in our quest for true co-operation and unity.'<sup>143</sup>

In light of these realities, Melbourne's theme was taken from the Lord's Prayer, 'Your Kingdom Come'. Gort notes that there are three ways to understand this prayer for the kingdom. The first way is in the indicative, believing that the kingdom has, in some way, already come. The second is the subjunctive understanding that the kingdom has not yet arrived. The third and final way, and the interpretation that took precedence at Melbourne, was as an imperative, '[indicating] openly that we (desire to) commit ourselves to the requisites entailed by the promises

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<sup>141</sup> 'Section IV: Christ – Crucified and Risen – Challenges Human Power' in *Your Kingdom Come: Mission Perspectives* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1980), p. 208.

<sup>142</sup> 'Section IV: Christ – Crucified and Risen – Challenges Human Power', p. 208.

<sup>143</sup> Philip Potter, 'From Edinburgh to Melbourne' in *Your Kingdom Come: Mission Perspectives* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1980), p. 20.

of the Kingdom, that we wish to be enlisted in and give ourselves to the service of this Lord and this Kingship, for the sake of the world and all who are in any manner needy and poor – love!’<sup>144</sup> Melbourne, as no other assembly before, focused on the poor and liberation, and all discussions concerning *development* and partnership were considered in this light.<sup>145</sup> In keeping with a main focus of liberation theology, the emphasis at Melbourne was moving attention away from seeing God at work in the centers of power (be they governmental or ecclesiastical), but instead focusing on what God is doing in and amongst the poorest and most vulnerable, at the margins or periphery of society. Gort observed that ‘[the] focus of Melbourne is to be found in its fundamental option for the economically and politically poor, and its unalloyed affirmation that solidarity with these is today a central and crucial priority of Christian mission.’<sup>146</sup>

Because the focus was on seeing God at work on the periphery, Melbourne spoke strongly to all churches regarding how they engaged in mission, challenging them to judge if they were truly working with the poor and most vulnerable, or if they instead worked only to consolidate and project their power. In the following statements, Melbourne acknowledged the very issues at the heart of the partnership discourse:

Churches are tempted to be self-centred and self-preserving, but are called to be serving and sharing. Churches are tempted to be self-perpetuating, but are called to be totally committed to the promises and demands of the kingdom of God.... Churches are tempted to be exclusivist and privileged but are called to be servants of a Lord who is the crucified Christ who claimed no privilege for himself but suffered for all. Churches tend to reflect and reinforce the dominating, exploiting structures of society but are called to be bodies which are critical of the status quo.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Jerald D. Gort, *World Missionary Conference, Melbourne, May 1980: An Historical and Missiological Interpretation* (Amsterdam: Free University, 1980), p. 10.

<sup>145</sup> The official report of the Melbourne Assembly, *Your Kingdom Come: Mission Perspectives* specifically mentions the presence and influence of Latin American liberation theologians, as well as the example of ‘base communities’ (*comunidades de base*), as significant influences on both the discussions as well as the findings of the assembly.. For further reading on the history and praxis of liberation theology, cf: Hugo Assmann, *Practical Theology of Liberation* (London: Search Press, 1975); Jose Miguez-Bonino, *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975). For Catholic contributions on this subject, cf: Leonardo Boff and Clovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2004); Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1988). For more on the ‘base communities’, cf.: Leonardo Boff, *Ecclesiology: The Base Communities Reinvent the Church* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1986).

<sup>146</sup> Gort, *World Missionary Conference, Melbourne, May 1980*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>147</sup> ‘Section IV: Christ – Crucified and Risen – Challenges Human Power’, p. 217.

The assembly report was also critical of the way in which churches raised funds for the support of missions, noting that the ends do not always justify the means:

We have heard many stories of ways in which the missionary enterprise of the churches, both overseas and in their own countries, has been financed with the fruits of exploitation, conducted in league with oppressive forces, and has failed to join the struggle of the poor and oppressed against injustice. We need to become more aware of these shortcomings and sins, to repent genuinely and find ways to act that will be Good News to the world's poor.<sup>148</sup>

While these criticisms were aimed at all churches, the report's harshest words were directed specifically at the churches of Global Christianity (and, more to the point, principally those in America). Scott stated that 'American Christians still have not abandoned the image of missionary activity as one-way traffic. From us to them. From West to the East. From North to South. From Christendom to the heathen. From developed countries to underdeveloped countries. This image falsifies the realities of our time. It fails to recognize that the churches of Asia, Africa, and Latin America have matured.'<sup>149</sup> Because this view was to a large extent the dominant motif of the *home base*, Global Christians continued to engage in mission in ways that allowed them to retain their hegemony, causing friction with partners in the World churches and, even more importantly, missing opportunities to join in God's work among those at the margins. Anderson stated that many Global church mission agencies 'concentrate on empire building. Each ... carves out its own territory (functional or geographical). Meanwhile important opportunities for developing the capacity for effective cooperation and joint action at local and regional levels are lost.'<sup>150</sup> And while all churches were challenged with how they obtained and spent their financial resources, the harshest condemnations were again saved for the Global churches:

Since churches of the wealthy nations give no more than one or two per-cent to 'overseas ministries' or world mission, and since in many cases 85% or more of their income is used directly for the needs of the local congregation, even much of the Church can be accused of living off the poor. The so-called Third World is a resource that brings comfort and prosperity to local congregations of North America and Europe, at the same time that many

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<sup>148</sup> 'Section I – Good News to the Poor', p. 177.

<sup>149</sup> Waldron Scott, 'The Fullness of Mission' in Gerald H. Anderson (ed.) *Witnessing to the Kingdom: Melbourne and Beyond* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1982), p. 50.

<sup>150</sup> Scott, 'The Fullness of Mission', p. 53.

people in those churches still consider these areas to be the 'mission field' and the object of charity.<sup>151</sup>

More than any previous assembly, Melbourne directly challenged the systemic issues that continued to cause division and strife between churches. This was an incredibly important contribution to the partnership debate, for as the assembly report stated, 'to build inter-church relations without challenging our own power structures, which dehumanize and betray the kingdom, is to build on sand.'<sup>152</sup>

Having clearly judged existing patterns of power and domination, delegates at Melbourne sought out alternative ways to live out authentic mission. For almost two decades talk had been about 'mission in six continents', although Global/World church relationships and power dynamics had not changed substantially. With Melbourne's focus on God's presence and action among the poor and those at the margins, emphasis was placed on new forms of partnership and solidarity:

We perceive a change in the direction of mission, arising from our understanding of the Christ who is the centre and who is always in movement towards the periphery. While not in any way denying the continuing significance and necessity of a mutuality between the churches in the northern and southern hemispheres, we believe that we can discern a development whereby mission ... may increasingly take place within these zones. We feel there will be increasing traffic between the churches of Asia, Africa and Latin America.... This development, we expect, will take the form of ever stronger initiatives from the churches of the poor and oppressed at the peripheries. Similarly among the industrialized countries, a new reciprocity, particularly one stemming from the marginalized groups, may lead to sharing in the peripheries of the richer societies. While resources may still flow from financially richer to poorer churches, and while it is not our intention to encourage isolationism, we feel that a benefit of this new reality could well be the loosening of the bond of domination and dependence that still so scandalously characterizes the relationship between many churches of the northern and southern hemispheres, respectively. We must in any case work for a new world order, joining in a common confrontation with powers at the centre.<sup>153</sup>

In the same line of thought, Scott noted that '[while] Western missionaries are still needed in some places, *non*-Western missionaries may be even more essential. If so,

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<sup>151</sup> William J. Nottingham, 'Cross-Cultural Mission at the Crossroads', *International Review of Mission* 69 (October 1980 – January 1981), pp. 440-441.

<sup>152</sup> 'Section IV: Christ – Crucified and Risen – Challenges Human Power', p. 221.

<sup>153</sup> 'Section IV: Christ – Crucified and Risen – Challenges Human Power', pp. 220-221. In 1982, the WCC published *Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation*, which is today considered an important contribution to an ecumenical understanding of mission. While ecumenical relationships are discussed in the document, the main findings are taken verbatim from the quote above. Since this is the case and any comments concerning them will take place in this section, a discussion of the *Mission and Evangelism* document will not form a part of this paper.

then the phenomenon of “emerging missions” ... takes on fresh import while the demand for genuine partnership between Western and non-Western missionary agencies acquires new force.’<sup>154</sup> For this proposal to be realized, however, Scott also believed that Global churches would have to readjust their understanding of mission so ‘it is no longer us *to* them, but us *with* them – and significantly *between* them and them! This new form of missionary movement is still embryonic. But who can doubt that it is the wave of the future?’<sup>155</sup> It is important to note that the call for this type of mission was not new; it can be traced back to at least Fleming’s ideas in *Whither Bound in Mission?*, and the Asian Christian Council had been facilitating the sending and receiving of missionaries within Asia since the 1950s. However, Melbourne put the issue into the context of power and powerlessness, centre and periphery. Thus, this was a challenge even to those churches involved in inter-hemispheric mission to ask themselves whether the mission in which they were involved benefited the ‘least of these’ or whether it only served to support the status quo. Despite these forward steps in the understanding of mission, Melbourne understood that much more needed to be done and urged

[that] CWME and national or regional councils of churches be called to take the initiative in challenging churches to implement better structures of co-operation in mission, helping them come together for the study of new possibilities for sharing in decision-making, better approaches to mutual support, ecumenical exchange of personnel, and united witness in the light of this report. In particular they should give new consideration to the reasons that led to the proposal for a moratorium. Such reasons have lost nothing of their urgency since the Bangkok conference in 1973.<sup>156</sup>

By focusing on the poor, Melbourne encouraged and challenged the churches, even those who were trying to implement new dynamics of power sharing into their relationships, that the task of seeking mutuality would not end, but was an ongoing process. Nottingham noted that ‘[there] are forms of power that grow up in churches even after a new kind of partnership in mission has come about, but the crucified Christ challenges that, as well. What is apparent is that moving from the centre to the periphery with the crucified Christ moves the locus of world mission ... from the old structures and traditions to new centres of inspiration, motivation, and identity.’<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Scott, ‘The Fullness of Mission’, p. 52.

<sup>155</sup> Scott, ‘The Fullness of Mission’, pp. 50-51.

<sup>156</sup> ‘Section IV: Christ – Crucified and Risen – Challenges Human Power’, p. 222.

<sup>157</sup> Nottingham, ‘Cross-Cultural Mission at the Crossroads’, p. 442.

While not giving it nearly the emphasis that it received at Nairobi, Melbourne also touched on the issue of *development*, discussing it in the light of liberation discourse. First, churches were challenged to be involved in challenging unjust structures and not simply reproducing secular, Western style development. Melbourne stated that those ‘missionaries who do work among the poor must not be content to dole out charity. Nor can they engage in that kind of “development” that allows for only a limited number of the poor to join the middle-class elite without working to overcome societal injustice for the many.’<sup>158</sup> In this regard, Nottingham noted that

very often personnel and money are requested for services as if the problem of poverty or human rights did not even exist in their country. There must be a concern for the people and their liberation, and the implication of Melbourne goes not only to mission boards but to the spokespersons, committees, and church membership on the other side. Sensitivity to the real development of the national community, a search for just structures, and the political wisdom to exercise intelligent charity and relief are not always at the highest level in the Christian community or among Christian leaders of the countries where the abuses and needs are most dramatic. There must be a rejection of the ‘catching-up’ theories of development and of that ideology which would place either the European socialist countries or western capitalism as the model.<sup>159</sup>

In a new contribution to the development debate, Matthey openly questioned the churches’ active participation in development, suggesting instead that those involved in mission should facilitate relationships and information. He stated that

[it] may be the task of the mission agencies, where they exist, to function as a kind of communication channel between frontier communities and individuals and the central church authorities, a window through which new individual or communitarian missionary experiments of crossing established limits can enter and fructify the whole life of the church.... This would mean that mission agencies and departments – as well as CWME – would turn away as much as possible from inter-church aid and development programmes – others do that well enough – from money sending activities, and become places for information and exchange, centres of network.<sup>160</sup>

Ideas such as this have become the basis of what today is referred to by some churches as ‘critical presence’; the idea and recognition that mission cannot solve all the problems people face, but instead should foster relationships of understanding and

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<sup>158</sup> Scott, ‘The Fullness of Mission’, p. 47.

<sup>159</sup> Nottingham, ‘Cross-Cultural Mission at the Crossroads’, p. 443.

<sup>160</sup> Jacques Matthey, ‘Melbourne: Mission in the Eighties’ in *Your Kingdom Come: Mission Perspectives* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1980), p. xvii.



the sharing of faith, culture, and ideas between Christians and peoples around the world.

When judging the significance of the assembly, Melbourne's most important contribution was 'the affirmation of the poor as the missiological principle par excellence. The relation to the poor inside the Church, outside the Church, nearby and far away, is the criterion to judge the authenticity and credibility of the Church's missionary engagement.'<sup>161</sup> As Nottingham notes, the focus on this new missiological principle

is more fundamental to cross-cultural mission than the criticisms and recommendations of Bangkok! It does not deal with the 'how' of mission, the rearrangements of structures and programmes and the power brokerage of denominational mission boards. It deals with the 'why' of mission as the transformation of life in society through the costly sacrifice and victory of Jesus Christ. ...What matters is not primarily 'moratorium' nor 'structures of dependency', but the real condition of oppression under which much of the world or many parts of the world are suffering, and the response of the ecumenical community in modern versions of faith, hope, and love.<sup>162</sup>

Although 'rearrangements of structures' and 'power brokerage' would continue to be discussed and debated, after Melbourne the churches' efforts to see and respond to God by working with those on the periphery would be a major factor in judging the validity of ecumenical partnerships.

### 8.7 Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches – Vancouver (1983)

As delegates met in Vancouver for the sixth assembly of the WCC, there were reasons for both despair and optimism. On the one hand the assembly understood that, despite churches' efforts towards *development* and social justice, the divide between the materially rich and poor continued to grow. As a result,

[at] present 30 million children under five die of malnutrition every year. Over 600 million people survive with less than US\$200 per annum. When we realize that two-thirds of the world's population are in the developing countries, that poverty is endemic in these countries and that their balance of payments of deficits are enormous, we can understand the immensity of the crisis. Alas, this understanding is blurred in the industrialized countries because of economic stagnation, rising unemployment and a feeling of impotence in the face of apparently insolvable problems. The economic crisis has become truly global in character and scope. The North-South dialogue, which people of good will have tried to promote, has failed, and the South is

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<sup>161</sup> Emilio Castro, 'Reflection After Melbourne' in *Your Kingdom Come: Mission Perspectives* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1980), p. 228.

<sup>162</sup> Nottingham, 'Cross-Cultural Mission at the Crossroads', p. 438.

being divided by the powerful nations and by the inherent contradictions within it.<sup>163</sup>

However, in the face of these realities movements for the rights of women, indigenous peoples, and the protection of the environment were beginning to organize and give voice to the marginalized. Potter notes that, even in the midst of crisis, '[what] people are seeking is dialogue, cooperation, interdependence, rather than confrontation, the willingness to listen and to be alert to the issues raised and to be transparent in dealing with one another.'<sup>164</sup>

Vancouver's most important contribution to partnership was that it made explicit something that had only been implicitly stated before; an emphasis on participation by the marginalized in structures of power and decision making. As already noted, delegates were aware that various social movements for the rights of the marginalized were gaining strength, and Potter commented that many were searching for 'dialogue, cooperation, [and] interdependence.'<sup>165</sup> In keeping with the assembly's theme 'Jesus Christ – Life of the World', the Vancouver report stated that '[life] is a gift of God. It is given to us by God, and we are called to life in its fullness. Such full life becomes possible only through participation. In Jesus we have a model of participation.'<sup>166</sup> The report also affirmed that God calls Christians to 'become new people who are truly human. To be thus truly human is to cease to be oppressors, or racists, or sexists. It is to live in solidarity with the poor and marginalized.... Real participation means becoming truly human. It implies involvement and encounter with others, sharing with others, working together, making decisions and living together as people of God.'<sup>167</sup> One obvious sign of Vancouver's preoccupation with this issue can be seen in the make-up of assembly attendees:

Of the delegates 30.46% were women (Nairobi had 22%; Uppsala had 9%), 13.46% were under 30 years of age (Nairobi 9%; Uppsala 4% under 35) and 46.3% were lay people (Nairobi 42%; Uppsala 25%). The regional breakdown was North America (158), Western Europe (152), Eastern Europe

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<sup>163</sup> Philip Potter, 'Introduction' in *Nairobi to Vancouver* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1983), p. xii.

<sup>164</sup> Potter, 'Introduction', *Nairobi to Vancouver*, pp. xiv-xv.

<sup>165</sup> Potter, 'Introduction', *Nairobi to Vancouver*, pp. xiv.

<sup>166</sup> 'Issues for the Churches and the WCC' in David Gill (ed.) *Gathered For Lift: Official Report, Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1983), p. 54.

<sup>167</sup> 'Issues for the Churches and the WCC', p. 54.

(142), Africa (131), Asia (114), Middle East (53), Latin America (30), Caribbean (19), Australia, New Zealand (26) and the Pacific (22).<sup>168</sup>

The report also listed barriers to peoples' participation, including racism, sexism, a lack of confidence by minorities, and 'unjust power structures in and outside the Church [which] often enable a few to dominate the many.'<sup>169</sup> While many churches had placed an emphasis on including representatives from marginalized peoples in ecumenical discussions for a number of years, Long noted that '[a] speaker from India pointed out that "the problem is not solved by providing for a few token representatives of such groups. It is an irony that marginalized groups are often represented by elite members of their group, who then become marginalized from the group they represent."' <sup>170</sup> It must be admitted that much of the thought concerning participation did not directly tie into discussions around partnership, but instead revolved around the inclusion of children, youth, women, and persons with disabilities in decision making processes.<sup>171</sup> That said, after Nairobi had stressed partnership 'at the margins', the discussion of participation and power could not help but affect the issue of partnership. As one of the preparatory documents for Vancouver stated,

[fellowship] in Christ should always lead to mutual fellowship – participation – of the members of the community (I John 1:3-7). In fact, fellowship with Christ can become real only through fellowship with others. Such koinonia means sharing of one another's sufferings, acknowledging one another's worth and dignity, helping in times of need, being willing both to give and to receive, becoming a community of loving participation in the life of others (Acts 2: 42-47).<sup>172</sup>

This emphasis on participation, given prominence at Vancouver, would continue to influence discussions on partnership as those who had been traditionally kept outside of decision making processes vied to have their voices heard.

On the issue of the churches' involvement in *development*, Vancouver also followed closely on the findings of Nairobi. After over a decade of existence, the

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<sup>168</sup> 'The Story of an Assembly' in David Gill (ed.) *Gathered For Lift: Official Report, Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1983), p. 7.

<sup>169</sup> 'Issues for the Churches and the WCC', p. 54.

<sup>170</sup> Charles Henry Long, *Vancouver Voices* (Cincinnati: Forward Movement Publications, 1983), p. 36.

<sup>171</sup> Until this time, the voices of women from Global Christianity have been quite muted, while voices of women from the World churches have been nonexistent. However, during and after Vancouver, the feminist/womanist critique of partnership and issues of power will become more important and pronounced.

<sup>172</sup> 'Moving Towards Participation' in *Issues: Discussion Papers on Issues Arising Out of the Life and Work of the World Council of Churches in Preparation for its Sixth Assembly: Vancouver, Canada, July 24 to August 10, 1983* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982), p. 3.

Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development could register some success. It was noted that 'CCPD has been able to effectively challenge the narrow understanding of development as simply economic growth, introducing the element of liberation into development.'<sup>173</sup> Vancouver continued an emphasis on 'appropriate technology', advising that 'systems of technological development should take into account indigenous resources and culture in relation to patterns of sustainable development.'<sup>174</sup> Emphasis was also placed on development education that would promote dialogue, participation, and ultimately solidarity: 'Development education must find ways to engage the peoples of the North and South, and East and West, in fruitful interchange.'<sup>175</sup> Vancouver recommended that the name of 'development education' be changed because for many, especially in the Global churches, it could be interpreted as an education on how to develop others. In the light of the Global/World church solidarity that the WCC sought to build, it was recommended that 'churches consider changing of name from "development education" to "education for justice and peace."<sup>176</sup>

Despite the emphasis on participation, the Vancouver Assembly did not add much to the partnership discourse other than reaffirming recommendations from previous conferences. For instance, it was noted that '[in] the global village which we are, Christians should visit one another more often. We welcome and encourage new forms of multilateral sharing of personnel in world mission, in the healing and sharing ministry of the churches. We see such sharing as a strengthening of witness and a sign of the universality of the Church of Christ.'<sup>177</sup> Likewise, the report stated that '[churches] in rich countries have to learn how to receive from materially poor churches, even as the latter must learn how to be givers. We must seek models of sharing material resources. The donor-receiver type of relationship must give way to relationships which facilitate the sharing of decision-making and power.'<sup>178</sup> In its stress on sharing power, the report referred repeatedly to the ongoing study of the 'Ecumenical Sharing of Resources', to which we now turn our attention.

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<sup>173</sup> *Nairobi to Vancouver*, p. 168.

<sup>174</sup> 'Issues for the Churches and the WCC', p. 79.

<sup>175</sup> 'Issues for the Churches and the WCC', p. 99.

<sup>176</sup> 'Issues for the Churches and the WCC', p. 99.

<sup>177</sup> 'Issues for the Churches and the WCC', p. 63.

<sup>178</sup> 'Issues for the Churches and the WCC', p. 64.

## 8.8 The Ecumenical Sharing of Resources and El Escorial (1987)

As we have previously discussed, starting in the late 1960s the issue of a moratorium on the sending and receiving of mission personnel, funds, and other resources was widely debated. The Nairobi Assembly of the WCC (1975), while echoing Bangkok's (1973) acknowledgment that in certain instances a moratorium may be beneficial in allowing the World churches space to formulate their own priorities and church life, also felt that a total reassessment of the ways in which churches give and receive needed to be undertaken. In that light, it was recommended

[that] concerted efforts be made to share personnel and finance in ways which promote both the proper freedom and the proper interdependence of all the churches. This sharing must be mutual. True sharing within a mature partnership means that churches are free to use personnel and financial aid in accordance with their own priorities; they can also decline any support which they feel would not further the cause of the gospel in their area.<sup>179</sup>

While still living with the moratorium debate, the WCC was seeking how 'mature partnerships' could be created, leading to this resolution and the WCC study known as the Ecumenical Sharing of Resources (ESR).<sup>180</sup>

The ESR study was formally launched by the Central Committee in 1976, which 'called for a "study on the ecumenical sharing of resources, to study all existing methods of sharing resources, both human and financial, to seek new and more ecumenical methods, and to relate the whole issue to the World Council's search for the unity of the Church."' <sup>181</sup> To start the process of reflection, a world consultation took place in Glion, Switzerland in 1979, entitled 'Conditions for Sharing'.

In the opening address of the meeting, Philip Potter recounted the long history of partnership, beginning with V.S. Azariah's call for 'friends' at Edinburgh in 1910. However, Potter noted that it was only 'in the 1970s that we have had to face the real issue of the ecumenical sharing of resources. Up to now we have been speaking in generalities and moving very slowly into real partnership.'<sup>182</sup> Potter listed three reasons for this. First,

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<sup>179</sup> 'What Unity Requires', p. 67.

<sup>180</sup> Michael Kinnamon, 'Assessing the Ecumenical Movement' in John Briggs, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, and George Tsetsis (eds.) *A History of the Ecumenical Movement* Vol. 3 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), p. 67.

<sup>181</sup> 'Ecumenical Sharing of Resources: Interim Report to the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, January 1979', *WCCExchange* 1 (March 1979), p. 1; hereafter cited as 'Ecumenical Sharing of Resources Report, January 1979'.

<sup>182</sup> *Empty Hands: An Agenda for the Churches* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1980), p. 49; hereafter cited as *Empty Hands*.

[development] aid has resulted in the rich countries getting richer and the poor countries getting poorer. This is due to the economic and political structures of both the giving and receiving countries.... It has been discovered that what is true of governments and industrial enterprises is also true for the churches. The structures of giving and receiving between churches do not facilitate real partnership.... In the past, too much was left to good will and fine statements and it has been shown that that is not enough.<sup>183</sup>

Second, Potter pointed out that the

issue of domination and dependence, of power and powerlessness has become clearer. The churches themselves are caught in this syndrome, especially as those of the rich countries continue to insist on bilateral relationships, ... just as governments and corporations do. The response to this ... is that the poorer people have to learn the meaning and the means of gaining power. The issue has therefore become empowering the powerless. The initiatives have to be, and are being, taken by the poor themselves.<sup>184</sup>

Despite the *rhetoric*, promoting partnership to mask the hegemony of the powerful was still being practiced within the ecumenical movement. Finally, Potter believed that '[another] reality which has emerged ... is the revolt against cultural imperialism. It is the insistence of Third World countries on their own cultural identity rather than being considered as developing in the image of the rich, industrialized countries.'<sup>185</sup>

In addition to these issues, Potter also noted a number of issues within the ecumenical movement that had thwarted past efforts at partnership. First, he pointed out that in the past, '[it] has all been stated in document after document. After Edinburgh, the rich countries could no more openly behave in a patronizing way and tended to say all the right things. But the emphasis on finance and technical expertise bedeviled the issues of sharing.'<sup>186</sup> Second, he stated that 'as long as the churches were only concerned about their internal relations with each other, in mission and service, the issues of sharing did not come out sharply. ...It was only when the churches were forced to be concerned about the questions of economic and social justice that their own inadequate structures of sharing were exposed.'<sup>187</sup> Lastly, Potter believed that 'the nerve of what we have to do lies in the structure of relationships,

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<sup>183</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 49.

<sup>184</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 49. Later in this same section, Potter points to the education work of the WCC, and specifically to the contributions of Paulo Freire in promoting education that 'concientizes'. For more on this, cf.: Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 2004).

<sup>185</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 50.

<sup>186</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 51.

<sup>187</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 51.

not in the theology of relationships.<sup>188</sup> Great theologizing had been done in the past. It had proved much harder to live it.

With Potter's critique in mind, from the beginning of the consultation four issues were emphasized:

the wide diversity of available resources...; the necessity for sharing among countries of the Third World on the one hand, and for sharing within the developed nations on the other, as basis for new relationships between traditional 'donors' and 'receivers'; the importance of 'country programmes' ... by which the churches in a given country may define their priorities ...; the necessity for a policy and practice of transparency between partners, implying relationships of mutual respect and openness....<sup>189</sup>

Along with these issues, participants at Glion called for 'an exploration of the true meaning of sharing: "We believe that there is a quality of sharing in which we neither ask, 'What do we have to give?' nor 'What can we gain?' – a sharing in which the very act itself is the end purpose.'"<sup>190</sup> When looking at the past and the barriers to ecumenical sharing, the consultation stated that '[the] basic assumptions and the fundamental issues ... are not new'; however, 'as in other areas, our practice has not kept up with our professed commitment.'<sup>191</sup> When noting this fact, the meeting also listed common themes that frustrated efforts at partnership:

the sharing of resources has been defined in a too limited way as the giving of money; the sharing of personnel has been too one-sided in the sending of missionaries, technicians, development workers, and others, from the West to the Third World; the one-way process of giving has created patterns of domination and dependence; outside aid, by the institutions and structures which it creates or maintains, in some situations prevents the Church from fulfilling its mission.<sup>192</sup>

It was also noted that, despite efforts of some Global churches and agencies to change the way they related to partners, 'it is difficult to overcome deeply rooted attitudes and patterns of behaviour on both sides. Both money and persons move along channels cut deep by tradition and reinforced by constituencies and confessional ties. It is difficult to give up institutions or change structures inherited from the past.'<sup>193</sup>

On the issue of *development* and interchurch aid, it was stated that the constraints and conditions placed on monies by donors 'may deprive the intended

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<sup>188</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 51.

<sup>189</sup> 'Ecumenical Sharing of Resources Report, January 1979', p. 2.

<sup>190</sup> 'Ecumenical Sharing of Resources Report, January 1979', p. 2.

<sup>191</sup> 'Ecumenical Sharing of Resources Report, January 1979', p. 2.

<sup>192</sup> 'Ecumenical Sharing of Resources Report, January 1979', p. 3.

<sup>193</sup> 'Ecumenical Sharing of Resources Report, January 1979', p. 3.

beneficiaries of their independence of action and power of decision. Problems arise when the need and criteria for giving conflict with the need and criteria for receiving.’<sup>194</sup> Finally, the Glion consultation understood that sharing needed to be understood as more than one-way traffic, declaring that

we have become conscious of the need for this study to provide opportunities for the churches in the ‘Third World’ to discover the resources they have and the ways in which they can share them with each other and with the churches who have traditionally been the ‘donors’. At the same time, the latter must face up to the consequences of their identity as churches of affluence and their mission in their own societies and not look only at their relationships with the rest of the world. This could be a means to a renewed relationship of partnership and sharing among all churches.<sup>195</sup>

While noting that the Glion meeting gave no recommendations to address any of these issues, it must be remembered that this consultation was simply the beginning of a process. While many meetings and discussions had taken place over the years concerning sharing and partnership, the problem (as Glion acknowledged) was not a lack of recommendations but that ‘practice’ had not kept up with ‘professed commitment’. Instead of repeating the *rhetoric* of the past, those present stated that the ESR process is ‘seeking no less than a holistic understanding of the mission of the Church, new relationships among the partners engaged in that mission, and new patterns and instruments of aid between churches for the coming years.’<sup>196</sup> In that light, and to facilitate the process, following Glion ‘about 30 working groups are planned to meet in all parts of the world to study the issue and its consequences for the life of the churches.’<sup>197</sup> Out of these meetings, taking place around the world and involving leaders from both the Global and World churches, the ESR study sought consensus on a way forward.

In 1980, after compiling the results and findings of the many working group meetings, the Central Committee published a study guide on the ESR called *Empty Hands: An Agenda for the Churches*, outlining the main ideas and principles that had been gleaned. The title of *Empty Hands* was significant and explanation was provided at the beginning of the study guide:

When people approach one another with their hands full of gifts for each other, they cannot even shake hands or embrace in greeting, much less

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<sup>194</sup> ‘Ecumenical Sharing of Resources Report, January 1979’, p. 3.

<sup>195</sup> ‘Ecumenical Sharing of Resources Report, January 1979’, pp. 3-4.

<sup>196</sup> ‘Ecumenical Sharing of Resources Report, January 1979’, p. 4.

<sup>197</sup> ‘Ecumenical Sharing of Resources Report, January 1979’, p. 6.



exchange their gifts, so long as their hands are full. First, they must set these gifts aside in order to greet each other with empty hands. Given our constant struggle against insidious temptation to incur gratitude and gain influence over others with our gifts, what better place on which to put these gifts when we approach each other than the altar at the foot of the Cross? ...We are now free to greet one another as sisters and brothers in Christ, to embrace, to walk together in witness and service, to laugh and cry together in joy and sorrow experienced in solidarity.... Each sister, each brother, becomes both a giver and receiver after they have met and embraced one another with empty hands.<sup>198</sup>

The study guide was divided into sections that emphasized various elements in partnership, including sharing and unity, power and solidarity, and giving and receiving. On the issue of sharing, the study emphasized the importance of personal encounters and building relationships across cultural lines.<sup>199</sup> When discussing finances, the study stated that '[rightly] shared, money can be an instrument of fellowship, but it is the most difficult resource to share. Money can create or destroy a relationship, but if it is the only ingredient of that relationship, we cannot speak of an ecumenical sharing of resources.... Churches must realize that all their material possessions belong to the community of humankind.'<sup>200</sup> When assessing the issue of giving, the problem of power was directly addressed: 'Churches around the world have considerable experience with one-way patterns of giving or receiving.... Not only does this type of giving reinforce dominance of the rich and dependency of the poor, but it also protects the status quo against a change in power structure.... Thus donors are protected from true giving – the total sacrifice to which Christ calls us.'<sup>201</sup> The study noted that what was needed in the face of this history of inequality was solidarity, stating that

[the] practice of solidarity implies partnership as an expression of new relationships, the quality of which is determined by the depth of sharing. A donor/receiver aid relationship can grow into solidarity through mutual respect and transparency, when the partners recognize that they have freely chosen one another and agree on common objectives. Temporary solidarity for limited goals is not enough. The struggle for justice is not likely to be brief,

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<sup>198</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 4. Some have challenged the assertion that it is possible to enter into cross-cultural relationships with 'empty hands'. For instance, Philip J. Knutson notes that in such relationships we are, in fact, 'never empty handed! We always carry baggage. ...In every encounter, even the first one, we come with the baggage of our personality, gender, culture, race, open and hidden agendas, preconceptions, hopes and fears.' Philip J. Knutson, 'Bridges and Gaps: Mission Partnership in South Africa' in *Word & World* 21 (Spring 2001), p. 170.

<sup>199</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 10.

<sup>200</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 12.

<sup>201</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 14.

and partners must be able to rely on one another for continuing, resolute support, whatever the cost.<sup>202</sup>

In looking at the issue of solidarity, the study, referring to the image of the body in I Corinthians 12, stated that ‘St. Paul did not say: “If one member suffers, others give.” In the practice of solidarity the first question is not what can we give or what can we receive, but how can we enter into the needs and lives of others?’<sup>203</sup>

The publication of *Empty Hands* was only one step in the search for mutuality and partnership, albeit a significant step. As the Introduction to the study noted, ESR was ‘a continuing process of reflection and action in which the WCC is both the launching pad, encouraging the process within its many member churches, ...and the target as it re-examines its own life and work.’<sup>204</sup> In writing about the practice of partnership, Padilla acknowledged that, while the world seemed to be getting smaller with advances in science and technology, the problem was that ‘there is inter-relatedness but not community.’<sup>205</sup> For Padilla, ‘[the] first task of the Church in this context is simply to be what God has intended it to be – a world community in which the barriers that separate men are broken down and the basis is thus laid for a genuine partnership in mission.’<sup>206</sup> By focusing on issues of sharing and unity, power and solidarity, giving and receiving, the *Empty Hands* study gave the ecumenical movement a framework in which to seek this inter-related and communal kind of partnership.

The next step in this ongoing process was to try and use what had been learned over the past years to ‘elaborating a new “resource-sharing system” for the WCC, implementing the ESR principles.’<sup>207</sup> In October 1987, a world consultation met in El Escorial, Spain, and set out a number of principles for churches and aid agencies to follow in a document entitled ‘A Common Discipline of Ecumenical Sharing’.<sup>208</sup> In looking at the issues and recommendations contained in the report, while it must be admitted that this was by far the most comprehensive document on ecumenical

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<sup>202</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 23.

<sup>203</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 22.

<sup>204</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 5.

<sup>205</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 40.

<sup>206</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 40.

<sup>207</sup> Huibert van Beek, ‘Ecumenical Sharing of Resources’ in Nicholas Lossky, *et al.* (eds.) *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2002), p. 382.

<sup>208</sup> The document is published in its entirety in Huibert van Beek (ed.) *Sharing Life: Official Report of the WCC World Consultation on Koinonia: Sharing Life in a World Community* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1989), p. 36-59; hereafter cited as *Sharing Life*.

sharing and partnership thus far, by and large the findings and recommendations were not new. In the section entitled ‘Socio-Political, Economic, and Ecumenical Context’, it was noted that the sharing of resources not only affects churches, but ‘takes place within a wider context of which it is a part, and which is characterized by political, socio-economic and cultural forces.’<sup>209</sup> Seen in this light, it was agreed that aid shared, even by churches, ‘is part of the power structures that are responsible for many imbalances and injustices in the world today. Such aid is not neutral. It carries ideological components which reflect the value systems of the donors, i.e. the powerful.’<sup>210</sup>

To address these imbalances, the report made a number of recommendations, including the need for a ‘radical change of minds away from the present money-oriented system to a new approach which is grounded in commitment, ... the comprehensive understanding of “mission” and “development” as parts of the overall mission of the church, [and] the need for education in all processes of sharing and solidarity including fund raising.’<sup>211</sup> Another important subject discussed in the report was the desire to find a biblical model for ecumenical sharing. While acknowledging that there are many passages in the Bible which deal with sharing, the conference stated that ‘[perhaps] the strongest biblical paradigm of sharing is the eucharist. ... Through this shared communion with Christ we enter into communion with one another. This is what constitutes the Christian community, the *koinonia*. It belongs to the essence of the church to be a community of sharing.’<sup>212</sup> In keeping with insights already gained at Nairobi and Melbourne, this idea of community was firmly based on solidarity with the poor, ‘helping oppressed groups to expose unjust use of power and oppose it, and enabling them to exercise the power they have in themselves.’<sup>213</sup>

Finally, the report discussed the various levels on which sharing takes place, locally, regionally, and internationally, noting the importance of ‘sharing decision-making between the partners at all levels of the process by which decisions are taken, ... openness (“transparency”) and accountability, [and] the readiness of all bilateral

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<sup>209</sup> van Beek (ed.), *Sharing Life*, p. 36.

<sup>210</sup> van Beek (ed.), *Sharing Life*, p. 37.

<sup>211</sup> van Beek (ed.), *Sharing Life*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>212</sup> van Beek (ed.), *Sharing Life*, p. 41.

<sup>213</sup> van Beek (ed.), *Sharing Life*, p. 43.

partnerships to face the challenge of also sharing ecumenically.<sup>214</sup> In fairness, it is clear that delegates knew there were no easy or new answers leading to *koinonia*, for the report states that '[there] is no one system or scheme that can offer all the solutions. What is needed therefore is a common discipline to guide the international sharing relationships of the churches.'<sup>215</sup> That noted, one can wonder what delegates thought would substantively change when most of what was recommended had been said before.

However, one new contribution of El Escorial to the partnership discourse was the section entitled 'Guidelines for Sharing'. Van Beek notes that, after dealing with the various elements of partnership and sharing, '[at] the eleventh hour a radical shift in the process was required, because the participants from the South felt strongly that they could make a genuine contribution only through their regional groups.'<sup>216</sup> This change led to a list of guidelines, with those present 'expressing the commitment ... "to follow this discipline themselves and to challenge their churches and agencies to accept it."'<sup>217</sup> The guidelines were not a list of recommendations, such as those discussed above, but were instead a list of commitments that, if followed, would serve as a guide for those seeking relationships of mutuality. The guidelines state, in part, that

*[we] commit ourselves to a fundamentally new value system..., to the marginalized taking the centre of all decisions and actions as equal partners..., to identifying with the poor and the oppressed and their organized movements..., to exposing and challenging the root causes and structures of injustice..., to enable people to organize themselves to realize their potentials towards self-realization and self-determination..., to mutual accountability and correction..., to present to one another our needs and problems in mutual relationships..., to resist international mechanisms which deprive the people of the South of their resources..., to shifting power to set priorities to those who are wrongly denied both resources and power..., to facilitate and promote dialogue and participation among the people of the South..., [and] to promote and strengthen ecumenical sharing at all levels....*<sup>218</sup>

Because they were an unexpected and last minute part of the consultation, van Beek notes that '[inevitably], the Guidelines bear all the shortcomings of an uneven, unfinished, imbalanced text coming out of the hectic last hours of a large

<sup>214</sup> van Beek (ed.), *Sharing Life*, p. 53.

<sup>215</sup> van Beek (ed.), *Sharing Life*, p. 52..

<sup>216</sup> van Beek (ed.), *Sharing Life*, p. viii.

<sup>217</sup> van Beek (ed.), *Sharing Life*, p. viii.

<sup>218</sup> van Beek (ed.), *Sharing Life*, p. ix. The complete text of 'Guidelines for Sharing' can be found on pp. 27-33.

gathering.’<sup>219</sup> However, he also states that ‘[paradoxically] that is also their strength: no church, no agency can deny that here is a genuine understanding of sharing in which justice, participation, equality and mutual trust are the basis for a common commitment of all. Those are goals which are not and should never be seen to be beyond our reach....’<sup>220</sup> In 1988, both the documents on the guidelines and disciplines of sharing were taken up and adopted by the central committee, who recommended them to all member churches for use in their ecumenical relationships.

When assessing the effectiveness of the ESR study, Briggs notes that although ‘the ecumenical sharing of resources has emerged as a conceptual framework that frees the church from being either sending or giving agents, or accepting or receiving bodies, replacing such a pattern with more genuine forms of partnership..., policy can become practice only by the intentional actions of the member churches and their mission agencies.’<sup>221</sup> As we have seen, many of the recommendations were not new but had been a part of the discourse since at least Bangkok (1973) and before. All that the WCC could do was to keep restating them because, after being recommended, it was up to each constituent church to follow them and, unfortunately, they seem to have generally made little difference in the actual workings of relationships. That noted, the one new contribution of El Escorial was the ‘Guidelines for Sharing’, which were written to help churches live out the recommendations with authenticity.

### 8.9 The San Antonio Meeting of the CWME (1989)

As delegates gathered at San Antonio, Eugene Stockwell reflected on the history of the Protestant missionary movement and celebrated how much had changed in the past eighty years:

Edinburgh was an overwhelmingly Protestant, white, male gathering, shaping a mission from the West to the rest. At San Antonio, about 70 percent of the delegates come from areas to which the mission societies at Edinburgh sent missionaries. Here we come from all corners of the world, representing all continents, all major races, female and male alike, Orthodox and Protestant, in a city largely Roman Catholic.<sup>222</sup>

<sup>219</sup> van Beek (ed.), *Sharing Life*, p. ix.

<sup>220</sup> van Beek (ed.), *Sharing Life*, p. ix.

<sup>221</sup> John Briggs, ‘The Changing Shape of the Ecumenical Movement’ in John Briggs, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, and Georges Tsentsis (eds.) *A History of the Ecumenical Movement* Vol. 3 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), p. 666.

<sup>222</sup> Eugene L. Stockwell, ‘Mission Issues for Today and Tomorrow’ in Frederick R. Wilson (ed.) *The San Antonio Report: Your Will be Done, Mission in Christ’s Way* (Geneva, WCC Publications, 1990), p. 115.

Frederick Wilson also wrote that, along with the large number of delegates from World churches, at San Antonio ‘[many] councils and churches did resist the impulse to send their experienced church officials and instead recruited women as well as men whose current ministries require direct engagement with people in need. One result was that 80 percent of the 275 official delegates ... had never before attended a major ecumenical gathering.’<sup>223</sup> Representing a diverse group of people, many new to this type of meeting, the delegates meeting at San Antonio continued, as past conferences had, to focus their attention on the issue of power and how it affected mission practice. The theme for the meetings was ‘Your Will Be Done: Mission in Christ’s Way’, and as Wilson notes, the very fact that the meeting was held in the United States opened doors to discussions on power and hegemony in relation to the *missio Dei*.

First, delegates saw that ‘[the] United States in general and Texas in particular represented all that is commonly perceived to be powerful. What better place to explore mission in Christ’s way with its provocative models of how God’s power is manifest?’<sup>224</sup> Secondly, delegates believed that ‘[the] economic policies of the United States directly and often negatively influence the quality of life in many parts of the world. What better place for a global ecumenical community to have opportunity to bear witness to these painful realities?’<sup>225</sup> As delegates discussed issues of power and partnership, these questions were ever present.

Coming just two years after the El Escorial meeting, San Antonio reinforced much of what had already been said there. In sharing their vision of what partnership should be, delegates stated that ‘[the] structures of the churches’ international relations in mission must be such that they help us to share our joys and our sorrows, our talents and our needs in a way which makes no one only a donor and no one only a recipient.’<sup>226</sup> The report noted that, despite the recent studies on the sharing of personnel as well as resources, there continued to be obstacles to achieving mutuality, including ‘psychological resistance to change of any kind; bilateral relations which exclude any ecumenical dimension; paternalism in all its forms...; [and] the priority

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<sup>223</sup> Frederick R. Wilson, ‘Introduction’ in Frederick R. Wilson (ed.) *The San Antonio Report: Your Will be Done, Mission in Christ’s Way* (Geneva, WCC Publications, 1990), p. 7.

<sup>224</sup> Wilson, ‘Introduction’, p. 14.

<sup>225</sup> Wilson, ‘Introduction’, p. 14.

<sup>226</sup> ‘Reports of the Sections’ in Frederick R. Wilson (ed.) *The San Antonio Report: Your Will be Done, Mission in Christ’s Way* (Geneva, WCC Publications, 1990), p. 76.

given to financial factors, with the resulting consolidation of the power of the rich to the detriment of the poor....'<sup>227</sup> While it was recognized that some organizations, such as CEEVA and CWM, had made significant structural changes, delegates were still encouraging churches to experiment together new ways of relating to one another: 'We are looking for models which reflect the guiding principles outlined above ... in which all the partners – in both north and south – can share on a footing of real equality. What we would like to see is a great variety of experiments attempting to put these principles into practice and thereby strengthening ecumenical activities at all levels....'<sup>228</sup>

While many of these topics had been discussed at recent ecumenical meetings, San Antonio did address anew two very important issues for partnership. The first of these dealt with missionaries and culture. Matthey notes that while past meetings had focused on structural and financial issues, 'San Antonio officially broke the silence on the ministry of missionaries, a silence which had lasted since Bangkok.... It is true that at the programmatic level the WCC had done much work on the exchange of personnel and resources. But its missionary theology had not really been insisting on the importance of the ministry of crossing cultural frontiers.'<sup>229</sup> In addressing the crossing of cultural frontiers, San Antonio noted that cross-cultural missions 'demands profound sensitivity to the cultures and values of others, a posture of incarnational dialogue, and identification with people in their struggles for justice, freedom and human dignity....'<sup>230</sup> The report also stated that, contrary to the way many Global Christians experience 'mission trips', 'persons cross frontiers in mission not merely to go to "get a job done" or to assist a partner church in a particular task. Rather they are sent and received as persons, to share all that they are and their denominational and cultural heritage, to affirm and share life in Christ in all its richness.'<sup>231</sup> Global Christians were also challenged to expect to learn much from their cross-cultural encounters, for the face of Christianity in the world was changing:

Where is the vitality of Christian faith most vitally expressed these days? In European cathedrals? In comfortable suburban US neighborhoods? In New York, London, Bonn, Moscow, Tokyo or Geneva? We find this vitality in struggling black communities in South Africa, in Latin American desperately

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<sup>227</sup> 'Reports of the Sections', p. 77.

<sup>228</sup> 'Reports of the Sections', p. 78.

<sup>229</sup> Jacques Matthey, 'Milestones in Ecumenical Missionary Thinking from the 1970s to the 1990s' in *International Review of Mission* 88 (July 1999), p. 289.

<sup>230</sup> 'Reports of the Sections', p. 74.

<sup>231</sup> 'Reports of the Sections', p. 75.

poor neighborhoods and basic ecclesial communities, in Indian villages, in Chinese renascent house churches ... who trust in the Spirit in every detail, in human rights movements, in women's movements for just emancipation, in all those unexpected 'Nazareths' from which we so easily expected nothing at all.<sup>232</sup>

While nothing in these findings is completely new, the refocusing of the missionary task from what Global Christianity can do for the rest to an emphasis on cross-cultural sharing and learning was significant, for it challenged those in the Global church to not only focus on structures for missions, but also on relationships and learning.

Secondly, as noted above, delegates from the World churches were overwhelmingly in the majority. This fact, along with the location of the conference in the United States, allowed those present to voice serious challenges to both the secular and church power and hegemony of the West. While recognizing that many U.S. churches were 'committed to the ecumenical sharing of resources', it was also stated that 'some churches, para-church organizations, and sects continue to support, both in the USA and internationally, ideologies and practices of domination through evangelism and aid programmes that promote and protect US interests. We call for an end to such practices and commit ourselves to expose them. The struggle for justice in the USA is critical to many struggles for justice in other countries.'<sup>233</sup>

Similarly, delegates from Africa wrote an open letter to the meeting, stating that while they were happy to be present in San Antonio, '[we] are, however, burdened too. We came here with our hearts heavy with the pain of our land and its peoples. We want to share with you fully our concern about the violation of human rights in ever-increasing spirals in too many of our countries.'<sup>234</sup> After listing a number of issues, including the struggle against apartheid in South Africa and the devastating effects of debt caused by the policies of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the representatives from Africa asked the churches of Global Christianity for real solidarity and partnership: '[When] one part of the body suffers then all suffer. A burden shared is a load lightened. Our fortunes are inextricably intertwined. What your nations and churches do or fail to do, somehow affects our

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<sup>232</sup> Stockwell, 'Mission Issues for Today and Tomorrow', p. 118. The explosive growth of World Christianity will become a constant theme at ecumenical meetings from this point forward, and is dealt with more fully in the next chapter.

<sup>233</sup> 'Reports of the Sections', p. 51.

<sup>234</sup> 'A Letter from the Africa Regional Group' in Frederick R. Wilson (ed.) *The San Antonio Report: Your Will be Done, Mission in Christ's Way* (Geneva, WCC Publications, 1990), pp. 187-188.



lives. So we plead for your understanding and of our common affirmation of kingdom values in our common world.’<sup>235</sup>

Comparing these statements to the earlier findings, which focus mainly on mission structure and finances, may serve to show a critical tension arising in the partnership debate. While unquestioningly the issues of resource and personnel sharing were still important to all involved, what delegates from Africa were asking for in the statements above was not assistance from others in sorting out *African* problems, but was instead a call for the Global churches to take stands against the forces of international domination and power *in their own context and culture*. In a real way, these delegates from the World church were insisting that Global Christians stop seeing mission as the expansion of a Western faith with Western answers, but understand that Global Christianity was also contextual, and that their context needed to be challenged as well. Instead of focusing simply on the structure of relationships, these delegates from the World church were focusing on the type of relationships. They were not asking simply for partners, but in Azariah’s famous words, for ‘friends’.

#### 8.10 Would Reassessment Lead to Changed Relationships?

Much had changed since Uppsala. As colonialism ended, many had hoped and expected a time of peace and growing prosperity. Instead, the gap between the rich and the poor, both between and within nations, grew exponentially during these years and it became clear that, especially economically and militarily, power and control still lay in the hands of the industrialized North. What was true for peoples and nations also applied to the churches of the ecumenical movement, who realized during this time that no matter how much they discussed the internal structures of their relationships, until all churches, especially those of Global Christianity, took radical stands on issues of social justice and equality, all of the talk would simply be empty *rhetoric*. As the findings at Melbourne (1980) had noted, ‘to build inter-church relations without challenging our own power structures, which dehumanize and betray the kingdom, is to build on sand.’<sup>236</sup> With this realization and challenge, the churches of the ecumenical movement moved into the last decade of the twentieth century, not knowing that

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<sup>235</sup> ‘A Letter from the Africa Regional Group’, p. 189.

<sup>236</sup> ‘Section IV: Christ – Crucified and Risen – Challenges Human Power’, p. 221.

the San Antonio ... mission conference [was] to be the last held in a politically and economically divided world, since in the autumn of that same year the Berlin wall was to fall. And so, for the first time since Edinburgh the missionary movement again found itself facing the challenge of one world under a single economic system. Thinking about mission from then on would have to tackle the causes and effects of 'globalization', both from the economic and the cultural point of view....<sup>237</sup>

While much reassessing had been done, with the fall of communism in Europe, the world in which partnership was to be lived was again going to radically change.

### 8.11 Tracing the Four Themes

As the last quarter of the twentieth century arrived, the inability of Western development to bridge the growing gap between rich and poor peoples, both within and between nations, caused many to reassess their hopes for the future. This realization, concomitant with the moratorium debate and the resultant studies on the Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel and the Ecumenical Sharing of Resources, had profound affects on both the Global and World churches who began to grasp that their efforts at internal changes, despite over four decades of meetings and resolutions on partnership, would continue to prove fruitless unless strong stands were taken on issues of social justice. And while all churches needed to take these stands, it was the Global churches, as potential benefactors from the present system, who had an especially important role to play.

When looking at the issue of the *home base*, most discussions revolved around the same issues as in previous periods. For instance, while the Nairobi Assembly of the WCC (1975) acknowledged that most Global church constituencies were still not yet aware that mission was to six continents and not to three, the solution offered was more education. Five years later, delegates at Melbourne (1980) criticized the Global churches, especially those of the United States, for still practicing mission as expansion *to* others instead of serving *with* others. It is interesting to note the power of finances on Global church views regarding the moratorium, for at least some believed that one of the primary reasons Global church leaders did not recall some overseas personnel was the missionaries' importance in raising funds and support from their constituencies. That said, it is also during this period that calls for

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<sup>237</sup> Matthey, 'Milestones in Ecumenical Missionary Thinking from the 1970s to the 1990s', pp. 299-300.

solidarity and fellowship led to a new emphasis on the importance of forming relationships between members of the Global and World churches. At Bangkok (1973), delegates noted the importance of not simply educating the *home base* on mission, but also having them host overseas visitors for the purpose of learning from them. Similarly, San Antonio (1989) said that those who go on cross-cultural mission trips should be much more focused on sharing and forming relationships than on simply doing things for others.

While much was written concerning the issue of *development* during this time, there was also much carry over from previous periods. Programs such as Inter-Church Aid and Joint Action for Mission, along with new ones like the Special Assistance to Social Projects (SASP), continued to struggle in helping churches work together to meet human need. As a result, the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (CCPD) was formed at the Nairobi Assembly (1975) to assist churches in reforming their conception and practice of development, though other than a few suggestions on issues such as appropriate technology, not much of note was achieved. However, during this time the ecumenical movement also realized that since Western style development benefited the donors' nations much more than the recipients, Global churches stood to benefit from unjust economic systems; thus, during this time not only were the methods of development questioned, but also the goals. Consequently, while Global churches were challenge to think differently about the development projects in which they were directly involved, they were also called to confront the unjust development policies and practices of governments and companies in their own countries.

However, the matter of power and international economics had the most affect on the issue of *rhetoric* and *reality*. Since at least Jerusalem (1928) there had been discussions on the relationships between Global and World churches, and after World War II and the onset of decolonization the call for partnership intensified. Despite this fact, when one researches the findings and recommendations of Whitby (1947) and subsequent world ecumenical gatherings, it is apparent that at the end of every conference, the same fact is admitted; the *rhetoric* of being partners in obedience was never *realized* in the actual relationships between churches and peoples. However, during this period, as issues of social justice came to the fore, churches began to realize that simply restructuring internally would not lead to changed relationships. Instead, until external issues of power and inequality, especially in regards to the

world economic system, were radically addressed, no amount of *rhetoric* was going to significantly alter the unequal state of Global/World church relationships.

Significantly, while issues of *authority* were still dealt with (as one can see in the findings of the ESP and ESR studies), during this time and after it was recognized that the problem of addressing power disparities and inequalities external to the churches was going to be the primary impediment to realizing partnership and mutuality.

## Chapter 9

### Partnership in a Time of Globalization

From the end of World War II until the late 1980s, people lived in a bipolar world, with the West (principally the United States) and Soviet Union vying for power economically and militarily. Other peoples and states, especially the nations newly formed during decolonization, had the difficult, often impossible task of balancing their own self interests while still desiring foreign aid (albeit with strings attached) from one of the two superpowers to try and ‘catch up’ with the West. However, as the last decade of the twentieth century approached, this bipolar world came to an end with the fall of communism in eastern Europe. With the Cold War over and the end of communism as a legitimate rival, the United States was free to project its power, its economic policies, and its culture, seeking to mold the rest of the world in its image; what is referred to today as globalization. While this new globalized world, which is still evolving today, introduced new possibilities for human interaction and relations, it has also posed new dangers of western hegemony, exploitation, and environmental degradation.

Paradoxically, while much of the globalization debate revolves around issues of Western hegemony, the explosive growth of World Christianity over the last few decades has added a new factor into discussions about church relations and partnership. In a world of secular globalization (which stresses interconnectedness, but not necessarily community) and dramatic demographic shifts in Christianity, the ecumenical movement continues in the task of guiding churches to build relationships of solidarity and genuine partnership between peoples around the world. However, despite the changed political and ecclesiastical landscapes, the problems related to power disparities between peoples, both internal and external to the churches, continues to affect the themes of the *home base*, *humanitarianism* and *development*, and *rhetoric* and *reality*, with special emphasis on the issue of *authority*.

#### 9.1 Globalization – Does History End with a Flat World?

When seeking to understand globalization, it is important to note from the outset that, despite the amount being written today on this subject, it is not a new phenomenon. As Jehu Hanciles writes, ‘[all] too often, in popular literature and some scholarly assessments, the historical antecedents of contemporary globalization are

completely obscured by an overwhelming emphasis on its uniqueness and novelty.<sup>1</sup> When seeking to ascertain this past history, Thomas Friedman and Robert Shaeffer, for example, both refer back to the European ‘discovery’ of the America’s, which they believe served to give people a global consciousness that had not previously existed.<sup>2</sup> Darwin dates globalization’s beginnings as far back as the fourteenth century to the Mongol leader Tamerlane, whose ‘passing coincided with the first signs of a change in the existing patterns of long-distance travel.... The discovery of the sea as a global commons offering maritime access to every part of the world transformed the economics and geopolitics of empire.’<sup>3</sup>

Within the ecumenical movement, a sense of the world getting smaller was evident at the first world meeting, the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions in New York (1900), where it was noted that

this is a time in which all the nations of the earth are coming to know more of each other than they have ever known before. The happenings of yesterday in Japan, in China, and in India, as well as in Europe and in Africa, were known in our city this morning. So the happenings of to-day will be known to-morrow.<sup>4</sup>

Ten years later, at the World Ecumenical Conference in Edinburgh, delegates there could also state they had

[a] vision of Earth! Known as a unit in this our day; every day more and more closely and organically knit by the nerves of electric cable and telegraph wire; more richly fed by the arteries and veins of railway-line and steamship ocean-way: one nation in extremist Orient thrilling at the words of some orator at furthurs sun-setting, almost as they drop from his lips: so that its inhabitants, for all the differences of tribe and race, become daily more convinced of the unity of their humanity.<sup>5</sup>

Regardless, however, of when one wants to date its beginnings (and in the interpretation of history there is always room for contestation) or how earlier manifestations were experienced, most commentators are of the opinion that, with the fall of communism in the late 1980s, there has been a significant shift in what

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<sup>1</sup> Jehu Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom: Globalization, African Migration, and the Transformation of the West* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2008), pp. 15-16.

<sup>2</sup> For more on the antecedents of contemporary globalizatoin, cf., Thomas L. Friedman, *The World Is Flat: The Globalized World in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Penguin Press, 2005); Robert Schaeffer, *Understanding Globalization: The Social Consequences of Political, Economic, and Environmental Change* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation*, p. 6.

globalization means and how it takes place, although there is still much debate in interpreting what these changes mean today and for the future.

One analyst is Francis Fukuyama who, writing in 1989, noted that with the fall of communism, '[what] we may be witnessing in not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalizing of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.'<sup>6</sup> Fukuyama (whose thesis is built upon the thoughts of Western political philosophers Alexandre Kojève and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel) believes that history is building towards a peaceful 'universal homogeneous state' where 'all prior contradictions are resolved and all human needs are satisfied. There is no struggle or conflict over "large" issues, and consequently no need for generals or statesmen; what remains is primarily economic activity.'<sup>7</sup> With the fall of communism, the last ideological rival to liberal democracy and free-market capitalism has been defeated and what remains is, as Fukuyama puts it, 'liberal democracy in the political sphere combined with easy access to VCRs and stereos in the economic.'<sup>8</sup>

It is important to note that Fukuyama's 'end of history' 'does not by any means imply the end of international conflict *per se*, for the world at that point would be divided between a part that was historical and a part that was post-historical. Conflict between states still in history, and between those states and others at the end of history, would still be possible.'<sup>9</sup> However, he believes that once states enter 'post-history' they will not want to engage militarily against other states in the same category. Fukuyama also asserts that 'at the end of history it is not necessary that all societies become successful liberal societies, merely that they end their ideological pretensions of representing different and higher forms of human society.'<sup>10</sup> In his view, regardless of what other political and economic systems various nations may

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<sup>6</sup> Francis Fukuyama, 'The End of History?' in *The National Interest* (Summer 1989), p. 4. This article, and the controversy that it aroused, led to Fukuyama publishing a book (*The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin Books, 1992)) elaborating more fully his basic thesis. Interestingly, ten years after his initial article was published, Fukuyama wrote another piece for *The National Interest* stating that, while his basic thesis had not changed, he believed that since scientific knowledge continues to expand, it may in fact be impossible for history, in the Hegelian sense, to end: Francis Fukuyama 'Second Thoughts' in *The National Interest* (Summer 1999), pp. 15-33.

<sup>7</sup> Fukuyama, 'The End of History?', p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Fukuyama, 'The End of History?', p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> Fukuyama, 'The End of History?', p. 18.

<sup>10</sup> Fukuyama, 'The End of History?', p. 13.

seek to follow now or in the future, the Western ideals of liberal democracy and economics are universalized as the highest form for everyone.

Another of the most famous commentators and authors on the subject of globalization is Thomas L. Friedman, a journalist for the *New York Times*. Even more exuberantly than Fukuyama, Friedman notes that

[the] fall of the Berlin Wall didn't just help flatten the alternatives to free-market capitalism and unlock enormous pent-up energies for hundreds of millions of people in places like India, Brazil, China, and the former Soviet Empire. It also allowed us to think about the world differently – to see it as more of a seamless whole. Because the Berlin Wall was not only blocking our way; it was blocking our sight – our ability to think about the world as a single market, a single ecosystem, and a single community.<sup>11</sup>

In his bestselling book *The World Is Flat*, Friedman focuses his analysis on the homogenizing (what he refers to as 'flattening effects') of contemporary globalization. As an example of the reality of this phenomenon, he notes a recent overseas trip: 'Columbus accidentally ran into America but thought he had discovered part of India. I actually found India and thought many of the people I met there were Americans. Some had actually taken American names, and others were doing great imitations of American accents at call centers and American business techniques at software labs.'<sup>12</sup> For Friedman, the flatter the world is the better, for he subscribes to what he calls the Dell Theory of Conflict Prevention, which states that

[no] two countries that are both part of a major global supply chain, like Dell's, will ever fight a war against each other as long as they are both part of the same global supply chain. Because people embedded in major supply chains don't want to fight old-time wars anymore. They want to make just-in-time deliveries of goods and services – and enjoy the rising standards of living that come with that.<sup>13</sup>

It must be noted that Friedman does admit that there are countries in the world that are not flat and cannot, at this time, be fully integrated members of our single 'global community'. He also acknowledges that integrating into this world community may

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<sup>11</sup> Friedman, *The World is Flat*, p. 54.

<sup>12</sup> Friedman, *The World is Flat*, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup> Friedman, *The World is Flat*, p. 587. This is actually an update of Friedman's previous theory first put forward in his book *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, which he calls the Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention. In this theory, Friedman states that 'when a country reached the level of economic development where it had a middle class big enough to support a network of McDonald's, it became a McDonald's country. And people in McDonald's countries didn't like to fight wars anymore. They preferred to wait in line for burgers.' Friedman, *The World is Flat*, p. 586.



be a slow and painful process. Nonetheless, like Fukuyama, Friedman believes that there are no alternative ways to exist if people are to succeed in life:

Of course there are costs to this growth... – in terms of environment, social cohesion, and economic equality, which governments need to monitor and mitigate – but let's stop downplaying the economic benefits, and let's stop pretending that the antiglobalization advocates have any realistic strategy for bring as many people out of poverty as quickly – if at all. There are many speeds that a country can go at down this globalization path – and each country has to choose the right speed for its particular social and political circumstances. *But there is only one right direction* [italics mine].<sup>14</sup>

For Friedman, as for Fukuyama, the best future for humanity can only be found in following the path of the West, and particularly that of the United States, in embracing liberal democracy and free-market capitalism

In response to both Fukuyama and Friedman, Jehu Hanciles, who has written widely on issues of globalization and mission, refutes much in their arguments. First, he notes that

the 'globalization is Americanization' view is deeply ideological. It fundamentally confuses Western aspirations with the needs of the non-Western world and, by misconstruing certain parts of the whole, bankrupts our understanding of the infinitely complex and paradoxical process of globalization. It needs to be stated that the concept of global culture or 'universal civilization' is a peculiarly Western one – one of many assumptions that distinguish the Western worldview from that of every other major culture. In this regard, the global culture thesis essentially reprises the centuries-old Eurocentric notion of 'civilization'.<sup>15</sup>

In this light, Hanciles notes that although some aspects of Western culture can and will be assimilated by others, its basic tenets 'are neither universal nor universally desirable – any more so than ancestor veneration, communalism, or extended family systems.'<sup>16</sup> Hanciles also asserts that, while celebrating the post-Cold War spread of democracy in various parts of the world, one must be careful before coming to the conclusion that this will lead to a peaceful 'end of history'. More correctly viewed, he believes 'the diffusion of the democratic ideal around the globe ... has been attended by contextual appropriation and implementation. In many places its mechanisms have contributed to the promotion of indigenous culture and have fostered the rise of civil society groups that coalesce around emotive causes and

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<sup>14</sup> Friedman, *The World is Flat*, pp. 433-434.

<sup>15</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 66.

<sup>16</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 79.

initiate powerful organized resistance to forms of hegemony.’<sup>17</sup> Konrad Raiser agrees, noting that ‘[while] there is the fear that globalization will lead to the imposition of a unified culture based on the Western values of consumerism, there is also growing evidence of the resistance of local communities defending their own culture or of migrants and indigenous communities trying to recover their cultural values and to mark their distinctive difference from the dominant environment.’<sup>18</sup> When looking at the ecological consequences of both Fukuyama’s and Friedman’s views, Hanciles rightly asks ‘[how] plausible is such a future ... given that planet earth could not possibly sustain on a global level the lifestyles associated with countries in which liberal democracy currently flourishes?’ For Hanciles, globalization is not a one-way process and in many cases, ‘[global] transformations do not simply favor hegemonic actors or entities; they also empower the periphery and marginalize the centre in profound ways.’<sup>19</sup>

Another commentator, Samuel Huntington, has very different views of the globalization process from those of Friedman and Fukuyama. Huntington’s thesis is that, far from ushering in an end to history,

[with] the end of the Cold War, international politics moves out of its Western phase, and its centerpiece becomes the interaction between the West and the non-Western civilizations and among non-Western civilizations. In the politics of civilizations, the peoples and governments of non-Western civilizations no longer remain the objects of history as targets of Western colonialism but join the West as movers and shapers of history.<sup>20</sup>

Huntington believes that the West is ‘now at an extraordinary peak of power in relation to other civilizations.’<sup>21</sup> Because of its hegemony, ‘the West in effect is using international institutions, military power and economic resources to run the world in ways that will maintain Western predominance, project Western interest and promote

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<sup>17</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 37.

<sup>18</sup> Konrad Raiser, ‘Opening Space for a Culture of Dialogue and Solidarity: The Missionary Objectives of the WCC in an Age of Globalization and Religious Plurality’ in *International Review of Mission* 88 (July 1999), p. 199. Many books have been published in the last few years advocating strategies of resistance for those seeking to stand against Western hegemony: cf., Samir Amin, *Delinking: Towards a Polycentric World* (London: Zed Books, 1990); Walden Bello, *Deglobalization: Ideas for a New World Economy* (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 2004); Noam Chomsky, *Profit over People: Neoliberalism and Global Order* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1999); and Graham Dunkley, *Free Trade: Myth, Reality, and Alternatives* (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 2004)

<sup>19</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 37.

<sup>20</sup> Samuel Huntington, ‘The Clash of Civilizations’ in *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Summer 1993), p. 23. Like Fukuyama, Huntington later published his thesis in book form in *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

<sup>21</sup> Huntington, ‘The Clash of Civilizations’, p. 39.

Western political and economic values.<sup>22</sup> In direct contradiction to Fukuyama's thesis about the supremacy of Western liberal democracy and free-market capitalism, Huntington, echoing Hanciles, asserts that

Western ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, the separation of church and state, often have little resonance in Islamic, Confucian, Japanese, Hindu, Buddhist or Orthodox cultures.... The very notion that there could be a 'universal civilization' is a Western idea, directly at odds with the particularism of most Asian societies and their emphasis on what distinguishes one people from another.... Modern democratic government originated in the West. When it has developed in non-Western societies it has usually been the product of Western colonialism or imposition.<sup>23</sup>

Because of Western hegemony and use of power, instead of a peaceful 'post-history' future, Huntington foresaw conflict between people of different cultures and religions, especially Western and Islamic, with the ultimate demise of Western culture in comparison to others.<sup>24</sup> For the world to avoid this future, Huntington believes that

[it] will ... require the West to develop a more profound understanding of the basic religious and philosophical assumptions underlying other civilizations and the ways in which those civilizations see their interests. It will require an effort to identify elements of commonality between Western and other civilizations. For the relevant future, there will be no universal civilization, but instead a world of different civilizations each of which will have to learn to coexist with the others.<sup>25</sup>

In the light of recent events such as the 9/11 attacks on the United States by Islamic fundamentalist, as well as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq that have resulted, it is tempting to claim that Huntington's thesis is, in the main, correct. As with Fukuyama and Friedman, however, Hanciles and others have noted some defects here as well. First, since Huntington speaks not about the clash of nations but of cultures, '[the] power of the nation-state (as a primary actor in international affairs) is eviscerated or reduced to insignificance.'<sup>26</sup> This, as least in the present world, is clearly not the case. Hanciles also notes that Huntington's thesis 'panders to a myth of unity that treats hugely fragmented or fissiparous entities like Islam, Christianity, and the West as monolithic homogeneous units and, by extension, downplays the

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<sup>22</sup> Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations', p. 40.

<sup>23</sup> Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations', pp. 40-41.

<sup>24</sup> To appreciate Huntington's analysis, it is important to remember that this was written almost a decade before the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

<sup>25</sup> Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations', p. 49.

<sup>26</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 77.

intense rivalries and power struggles that have long persisted within such entities.’<sup>27</sup> Stanley Kurtz agrees, asking whether, with the sustained ‘war on terror’ that has been waged by the United States and its allies, ‘can the forces of Islamic reaction remain as confident and ascendant as Huntington once suggested?’<sup>28</sup> Finally, Hanciles states that Huntington’s thesis ‘greatly underestimates the enduring power of secularism and the attractiveness of consumer culture.’<sup>29</sup>

Is the end of history a flat world? Or are we destined to experience a clash of civilizations? According to Hanciles, ‘[probably] the safest conclusion that can be drawn from the plethora of studies on globalization is that reality is more complicated than theory. There is no golden, one-size-fits-all, theoretical model; and no approach appears to be uncontested.’<sup>30</sup> Alternatively, he asserts it is more helpful to understand that ‘far from being a one-directional, single, unified phenomenon, the processes of globalization are multidirectional, inherently paradoxical, and incorporate movement and countermovement.’<sup>31</sup> As the ecumenical movement entered the end of the twentieth century, it had to grapple with this ‘multidirectional, inherently paradoxical’ process called globalization. And when looking at the post Cold War world ecumenical meetings, it is obvious that, although many decisions had been taken on new structures and processes of relating to one another, the contestation of power in this globalized world would continue to make realizing true partnership an elusive goal.

## 9.2 A True World Faith – The Growth of World Christianity and Migration

Before we continue to analyze and discuss world ecumenical meetings and partnership, it is important to recognize a couple of relatively new developments in international Christianity that slowly became topics of conversation at these meetings; the growth, in both vitality and adherents, of World Christianity, and the migration of World Christians to the countries of the North.

First, the rise of World Christianity as the focal point of international Christianity is being interpreted in a number of ways. Philip Jenkins, who has popularized this topic in his book *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global*

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<sup>27</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 77.

<sup>28</sup> Stanley Kurtz, ‘The Future of “History”’: Francis Fukuyama and Samuel P. Huntington, post-September 11’, June/July 2002. <[www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/3460391.html](http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/3460391.html)>

<sup>29</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 77.

<sup>30</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 14.

<sup>31</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 2.

*Christianity*, notes that, despite that fact that religious scholars have discussed this subject for a number of decades, in the West ‘[many] of us share the stereotype of Christianity as the religion of the ... global North. It is self-evidently the religion of the haves. To adapt the phrase once applied to the increasingly conservative U.S. electorate of the 1970s, the stereotype holds that Christians are un-Black, un-poor, and un-young.’<sup>32</sup> However, notwithstanding the stereotypes, Jenkins notes that ‘[over] the past century ... the center of gravity in the Christian world has shifted inexorably southward, to Africa, Asia, and Latin America. ...If we want to visualize a “typical” contemporary Christian, we should think of a woman living in a village in Nigeria or in a Brazilian *favela*.’<sup>33</sup> Bediako believes that the reason that so few have grasped this change is because ‘we continue to think, not in *historical* terms, but rather in *geopolitical* terms, so that we have difficulty in coming to terms with the modern reality: that the majority of Christians in our world are to be found in the poorer and not in the more affluent parts.’<sup>34</sup>

When looking at numbers of Christians internationally, Jenkins asserts that while Africa and Asia have the largest populations, at this time ‘next to no common sense of identity currently unites the churches and believers of the two continents.’<sup>35</sup> However, he asserts

[given] the lively scholarly activity and the flourishing spirituality in both Africa and Latin America, a period of mutual discovery is inevitable. When it begins – when, not if – the interaction should launch a revolutionary new era in world religion. Although many people see the process of globalization as yet another form of American imperialism, it would be ironic if an early consequence was a growing sense of identity between Southern Christians. Once that axis is established, we really would be speaking of a new Christendom, based in the Southern Hemisphere.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, p. 2. Although Jenkins has recently brought this development to the attention of a wider audience, one of the first to write about this subject was David Barrett, who wrote as far back as 1970 that ‘by AD 2000 the centre of gravity of the Christian world will have shifted markedly southwards, from Europe and North America to the developing continents of Africa and South America. ...Christianity, long a religion of the predominantly white races, will have started to become a religion of predominantly the non-white races.’ David Barrett, ‘AD 2000: 350 Million Christians in Africa’ in *International Review of Mission* 59 (January 1970), pp. 49-50.

<sup>33</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, p. 2.

<sup>34</sup> Kwame Bediako, ‘New Paradigms on Ecumenical Cooperation: An African Perspective’ in *International Review of Mission* 81 (July 1992), p. 375.

<sup>35</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, p. 12. On this point, Jenkins assertion is not entirely correct. For instance, EATWOT (the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians) was formed in 1976 as representatives from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, realizing that World Christianity had inherited its theology from the Global churches, gathered together to formulate theologies to address their own contexts, issues, and struggles.

<sup>36</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, p. 12.

Hanciles, while appreciative of Jenkins' work to bring this phenomenon to the attention of a larger audience, is however quite critical of his use of Christendom in describing it, for

its usage ... implicitly imprisons the study of non-Western Christianity within a Western theological framework and thus impoverishes understandings of its nature and significance. ... The experience of Christendom perhaps predisposes Westerners to think of religious phenomena in terms of a permanent center and structures of unilateral control. In this new Christian epoch this outlook is patently unhelpful. Non-Western (or 'Southern') Christianity has no pope, no Rome and, for that matter, no Mecca.<sup>37</sup>

Bediako agrees with Hanciles, noting that while historically Global Christianity placed the center of power in the Northern nations of 'Christendom', 'an important effect of the southward shift of the church's axis has been to give to Christianity ... new "centres of universality"'.<sup>38</sup> Despite this criticism, however, Hanciles is in complete agreement with Jenkins on the significance of this development, stating that '[the] southward shift in global Christianity's center of gravity is extraordinary by any reckoning. It represents perhaps the most remarkable religious transformation of the twentieth century....'<sup>39</sup> Bediako also agrees, asserting that '[by] becoming a non-Western religion, Christianity has also become a true world faith.'<sup>40</sup> However one interprets this shift, as the ecumenical movement met during the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century, this fact was slowing becoming an important topic of conversation.

A second trend, and one closely related to the first, is the migration of peoples from the South to the North, or what Andrew Walls calls the 'Great Reverse Migration'. Throughout the time of European colonialism, masses of peoples left Europe for other parts of the world. Walls notes that 'some went under compulsion, as refugees, indentured labourers, or convicts, some under conditions of employment as soldiers or officials, some from lust of wealth or power. Most, however, were simply seeking a better life or a more just society than they found in Europe.'<sup>41</sup> However, by the middle of the twentieth century,

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<sup>37</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 134.

<sup>38</sup> Bediako, *Christianity in Africa*, p. 157.

<sup>39</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 131.

<sup>40</sup> Bediako, *Christianity in Africa*, p. 265.

<sup>41</sup> Andrew Walls, 'Afterword: Christian Mission in a Five-Hundred-Year Context' in Andrew Walls and Cathy Ross (eds.) *Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Exploring the Five Marks of Global Mission* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 2008), p. 193.

the Great European Migration not only came to an end, it went into reverse. Numbers of people from Africa, from Asia, and from Latin America began to move to Europe and North America, and to set down roots there. ...The Great Reverse Migration alters the dynamics of cultural and religious relations. Africa and Asia are now part of Europe, part of North America, where once they lay at the end of a long maritime journey.<sup>42</sup>

Jenkins notes that this reversal will signal a significant change because, as the number of World Christians migrants increases, the 'swelling populations of global South migrants in the North will give a more Southern quality to many North American and European congregations.'<sup>43</sup> Hanciles agrees, noting that when looking at these two phenomena together, 'the fact that the southward shift in global Christianity's center coincides with the epochal reversal in the direction and flow of global migrations is of historic consequences.'<sup>44</sup> Just as the World church's importance as the focal point of Christianity has been part of the recent ecumenical conversation, so has the increasing number of World Christians who have migrated and made their homes in the lands of the Global churches, with all the possible implications for cross-cultural relations.

### 9.3 Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches – Canberra (1991)

In February 1991, 852 voting delegates from over 300 churches, representing over 100 countries, gathered in Canberra for the seventh assembly of the WCC. Of the voting delegates, roughly 48 per cent came from the churches of the South.<sup>45</sup> The theme of the assembly was 'Come, Holy Spirit – Renew the Whole Creation' and as Michael Kinnamon notes, this was 'the first time the theme of a WCC assembly focused on the third person of the Trinity, and for the first time the theme took the form of a prayer....'<sup>46</sup> In addition, whereas past assemblies had given some notice to environmental degradation, especially in relation to Western 'development', Canberra was the first Assembly to have an overtly environmental agenda. Again, according to Kinnamon, while former gatherings had been aware that the human actions were destroying our planet, what Canberra recognized for the first time was 'an increasing

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<sup>42</sup> Walls, 'Afterward: Christian Mission in a Five-Hundred-Year Context', p. 194.

<sup>43</sup> Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 14.

<sup>44</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christianity*, p. 6.

<sup>45</sup> According to the official report, 407 represented churches in the South, out of a total of 852.

<sup>46</sup> Michael Kinnamon, 'Canberra 1991 – A Personal Overview and Introduction' in Michael Kinnamon (ed.) *Signs of the Spirit: Official Report Seventh Assembly* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), p. 14.

realization that *our* attempts to fix things are, by themselves, woefully inadequate. God alone is the source of creation. It is to God, ever present through the Spirit, that we must turn in prayer if we would be renewed.<sup>47</sup> Finally, delegates at Canberra faced squarely the new, globalized world, in which the United States was the only superpower. As the assembly began, '[the] war in the Gulf was barely three weeks old.... The war did not, as many had feared, overshadow all else on the agenda; but it did provide a constant, sobering backdrop to the gathering.'

When looking at Canberra's contribution to the partnership discourse, little new was added as many of the themes had been addressed at previous ecumenical gatherings. First, surprisingly it seems that the term 'sending churches' was still in use, even though the terms 'sending' and 'receiving' were recognized as promoting a false dichotomy between the churches of the Global and World Christianity as far back as the Jerusalem IMC meeting in 1928. According to Canberra's official report,

[it] has been customary to speak of 'sending churches' in some parts of the world. Where aggressive 'sending' has been done by churches, particularly from the West to the South, the phrase is problematic. If we continue to use the term we should emphasize that *Christ* sends through the church in the power of the Holy Spirit. Structural changes are required where 'sending' perpetuates denominational engagement in mission and separated churches.<sup>48</sup>

A second theme was that of partnership as solidarity and mutuality. Canberra stated that

[our] brother and sister Christians in many parts of the world suffer pain, persecution, and oppression. Many are exploited to satisfy the desire of people in the North and the West. The church must be in solidarity with these victims in their suffering. Christians in these prosperous areas must have the humility to learn from those oppressed sisters and brothers. Thus there can be real sharing and a partnership in mission even in the midst of economic injustice and political hostility and this is a witness by the church to the gospel of reconciliation.<sup>49</sup>

Finally, Canberra focused on the concept of 'sharing', which had been much discussed for the greater part of two decades and formed a major part of the discussions at El Escorial. Canberra stated that '[sharing] means giving and receiving by all to one another to effect reconciliation and to promote growing together. In response to the cries of the poor and the marginalized in the world, sharing means

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<sup>47</sup> Kinnamon, 'Canberra 1991 – A Personal Overview and Introduction', p. 14.

<sup>48</sup> 'Report of Section III – "Spirit of Unity – Reconcile Your People!"' in Michael Kinnamon (ed.) *Signs of the Spirit: Official Report Seventh Assembly* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), p. 101.

<sup>49</sup> 'Report of Section III – "Spirit of Unity – Reconcile Your People!"', p. 101.



committing ourselves as churches to the sharing of power and resources so that all may fully participate in mission.’<sup>50</sup> However, while echoing the findings of El Escorial, Canberra admitted that on the whole little of significance had changed in regards to the practice of partnership. In the preparatory materials published prior to the assembly, it was stated that

[the] ESR process has encountered many obstacles. One of the greatest has been the difficulty of translating the concept into concrete structural changes in the present relationships of giving and receiving.... Another problem lies in the distinction between ‘material’ and ‘non-material’ resources, and the difficulty of including both in a comprehensive approach to sharing: spiritual values do not lend themselves to the same type of ‘transfer’ as a project grant. A third question is that of the bilateral relationships ‘verses’ ecumenical channels of sharing, which are multilateral in nature.<sup>51</sup>

Given all these issues, then, ‘[it] is hardly surprising that there is frustration at the lack of change; the kind of transformation which ESR calls for is so radical that it either happens slowly – and changes are evident if one looks back over a long period of time – or comes in unexpected ways.’<sup>52</sup> In all of these areas, Canberra was disappointing. Previous meetings had passed numerous resolutions calling for the churches to respond by changing their structures and relationships. That Canberra needed to repeat these serves to show how entrenched were issues of power, paternalism, and vested interest.

As with partnership, when discussing the issue of *development*, no new insights were uncovered. As past conferences had done, Canberra acknowledged that Western directed development had not served to help those in need but rather led to an increase in the gap between rich and poor. In understanding what development meant, the 1975 Nairobi Assembly had tried to steer churches from ‘growth’ centered definitions towards programs that increased people’s ability to live what was referred to as a ‘meaningful life’. Similarly, Canberra stated that

[humankind] has failed to distinguish between growth and development. While advocating ‘sustainable development’ many people and groups in fact often have found themselves promoting ‘growth’. Growth for growth’s sake – the continued addition of what already is present – is the strategy of the cancer cell. Growth for growth’s sake is increase in size without control, without limit, in disregard for the system that sustains it. It ultimately results in degradation and death. Development on the other hand – like the strategy of

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<sup>50</sup> ‘Report of Section III – “Spirit of Unity – Reconcile Your People!”’, p. 102.

<sup>51</sup> Jean Stromberg, ‘General Secretariat Report’ in Thomas F. Best (ed.) *Vancouver to Canberra: 1983-1990* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990), p. 51-52.

<sup>52</sup> Stromberg, ‘General Secretariat Report’, p. 52.

the embryo – is getting the right things in the right places in the right amounts at the right times with the right relationships.<sup>53</sup>

Canberra also took note that, in the face of Western led development, globalization, and ‘structural adjustment programs’, ‘[around] the world we see that small groups of people of all races and classes, filled with courage and hope, can make a difference.’<sup>54</sup>

The report noted that the response of these communities could be seen in two ways:

First, they organize themselves in order to resist. They resist the global corporations with their policies for ‘development’ from above. Their action is based on the strong belief that what is not good for marginalized people is not good for society. Secondly, these small local communities try to live against the trends of an acquisitive society in which greed and social and ecological exploitation predominate.<sup>55</sup>

In acknowledging these grassroots movements, delegates were encouraged to ‘[facilitate] and encourage the participation of people against the powers of oppression and destruction...’, as well as to ‘[renew the] study of the international economic order including the need for new models based on cooperation, not on competition...’<sup>56</sup> However, while these resolutions sound nice, as at past conferences, they did little to enable churches to translate them into specific actions of solidarity.

In assessing Canberra’s effectiveness as an assembly, van Butselaar notes that while it ‘proved to be a good meeting for worship and friendship, ...the rest of the programme got stuck. The basic mistake was that the WCC ... thought that it could do without an analysis of the past, without an analysis of new developments and simply continue with the ecumenical “master-plan”....’<sup>57</sup> When looking at the official record of findings and recommendations, van Butselaar also states that ‘[it] became clear ... that ecumenical structures were not able to react adequately to the new momentum in world history.’<sup>58</sup> To be fair, Canberra only met two years after the fall of the Berlin wall, and was in any case naturally still concerned with implementing past decisions, especially in regard to the Ecumenical Sharing of Resources. That noted, Canberra added little new to ecumenical discussions on partnership. It would

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<sup>53</sup> ‘Report of Section I – “Giver of Life – Sustain Your Creation!”’ in Michael Kinnamon (ed.) *Signs of the Spirit: Official Report Seventh Assembly* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), pp. 63-64.

<sup>54</sup> ‘Report of Section I – ‘Giver of Life – Sustain Your Creation!’’, p. 62.

<sup>55</sup> ‘Report of Section I – ‘Giver of Life – Sustain Your Creation!’’, p. 62.

<sup>56</sup> ‘Report of Section I – ‘Giver of Life – Sustain Your Creation!’’, p. 69.

<sup>57</sup> van Butselaar, ‘Thinking Globally, Acting Locally’, p. 369.

<sup>58</sup> van Butselaar, ‘Thinking Globally, Acting Locally’, p. 370.

be left to later ecumenical gatherings to more clearly chart a way forward in this new world order.

#### 9.4 Bangalore Consultation: Towards Responsible Relationships in Mission (1996)

Before finishing the review of the CWME meetings and WCC Assemblies, it is important to pause and examine the report emanating from an ecumenical consultation that took place in Bangalore in May 1996. The purpose of the consultation, according to Christopher Duraisingh, was to study the history of Global/World church relationships, with an emphasis on looking at how these had changed and evolved.<sup>59</sup> Because the concept of 'Mission in Six Continents' gained prominence at the CWME meeting in Mexico City in 1963, special focus was given to events and decisions that followed. To ensure that the consultation and its discussions received the highest exposure, it served as the focus of an entire issue of the *International Review of Mission* in July 1997. Also included in the issue was a special report, coordinated and compiled by John Brown, that drew attention to a number of issues, including a study on the structural changes made by Global churches and mission societies, as well as a discussion of issues that were still problematic in living out relationships of mutuality. Over the past years, much had been written and many resolutions passed stating the need for changed relationships in mission. In light of the findings of El Escorial, delegates at San Antonio and Canberra had asked churches within the ecumenical movement to submit examples of new ways in which partnership and mutuality could be lived out. The Bangalore Consultation was a time to report on the changes that had taken place, as well as take stock of problems and impediments to partnership that still existed.

As delegates gathered, they were confronted with a number of topics for discussion and debate. One group was tasked to consider theologically a number of questions, including 'Can the rich be partners of the poor?' and 'Can the poor be partners of the rich?'<sup>60</sup> In stating their understanding of resources, delegates noted that '[resources] for mission are more than mere finances. ...Therefore, tears, emptiness, traditions and knowledge are all resources. Sharing requires an expression

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<sup>59</sup> Christopher Duraisingh, 'Editorial' in *International Review of Mission* 86 (July 1997), pp. 203-206.

<sup>60</sup> 'Report of an International Consultation on Relationships in Mission: Bangalore, 19-22 May 1996' in *International Review of Mission* 86 (July 1997), p. 275; hereafter cited as 'Bangalore Consultation'.

of neediness and willingness to receive non-material more than material resources.<sup>61</sup> That said, delegates also understood that in reality both Global and World churches tended to put more value on material resources, therefore it was also important to address the issue of power: 'Power goes with resources. That is a reality. The power is to be used as an enabling force. Sharing is to promote fullness of life, and anything that diminishes life is to be resisted. The rich are able to use their financial resources to manipulate. The poor also have the power to manipulate – they know how to write.'<sup>62</sup> In keeping with their task to look at issues theologically, this group gave a definition of partnership, grounding it in both the New Testament as well as the Hebrew scriptures, stating:

Our understanding of partnership is grounded in our understanding of the Trinity as community. Partnership is an expression of *koinonia* (Acts 2). It is this that determines the style of partnership. In reflecting on the dynamic of partnership it is essential to bear in mind the model of the kenotic power of Jesus. Partnership is a present sharing of the model of the eschatological banquet in which Jesus pictures the new community of God's reign being built around the people who are pushed to the periphery. ...The key word describing relationships that pertain in a covenant is *hesed* (solidarity). As God acts in solidarity with God's people, so people within the covenant are expected to act in solidarity with one another.<sup>63</sup>

When looking at the above theological understanding, one can appreciate the continued effort to ground the concept of partnership in Biblical terms. However, most of this theological work had previously been affirmed; as Philip Potter stated during the ESR process in the 1980s, 'the nerve of what we have to do lies in the structures of relationships, not the theology of relationships.'<sup>64</sup>

At Bangalore, a second group was given the task of studying structural issues. In their report, they listed a number of obstacles to partnership. First, they stated that 'the language of our basic principles – mutual accountability, transfer of power, sharing of resources – are frightening to many who have held power.'<sup>65</sup> For many World churches, delegates also admitted that '[the] consequences of our principles when put into practice are often initially painful to a historically dependent church, leading it to revert back or find ways to skirt the practical implications of these

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<sup>61</sup> 'Bangalore Consultation', p. 277.

<sup>62</sup> 'Bangalore Consultation', p. 277.

<sup>63</sup> 'Bangalore Consultation', pp. 277-278.

<sup>64</sup> *Empty Hands*, p. 51.

<sup>65</sup> 'Bangalore Consultation', p. 285.

consequences.’<sup>66</sup> Importantly, Bangalore understood that, regardless of other obstacles, the main issue for both Global and World churches was historical. Any changes in structures and relationships would have to contend with the ‘traditional and ever-present understanding of mission that we find to be based on a nineteenth century missionary agenda of building outposts of sending churches, agencies and organizations.’<sup>67</sup> When commenting on contemporary models for mission, delegates stated that ‘[we] see the efforts of CEVAA [and] CWM ... as schools and testing grounds to unlearn and re-order old historical patterns.... They become the starting point and the schools through which the churches involved can open up and let down their defenses so as to be able to reach out to their neighbor church and beyond.’<sup>68</sup> Finally and importantly, those present were confronted with the question of whether, if funds were not part of the equation, partnership would be desirable. In answering, delegates spoke unequivocally:

The group took a clear position that indeed, even without the funding element, partnerships would be and should be pursued. The group cited the example that there is a growing need for strategy for sharing in ways of being creative about overcoming the consequences of the partnership principles such as self-reliance for the churches formerly dependent, and for inspiring congregations in overcoming fear of these principles in the former power countries.<sup>69</sup>

In assessing the work of this group, and admitting that much of what was said was not new, one important contribution needs to be noted. While issues of power had been addressed at previous meetings, a clear statement was made connecting the understanding and use of power to historical antecedents. While it is true that words such as solidarity and mutuality have been used for at least four decades, partnership cannot escape its colonial heritage and, however much one tries to secure the concept in Biblical/liberationist language, that history is ever present, especially in relation to *authority* in finances and decision making.

As stated earlier, along with the Bangalore report, the *IRM* also printed a study, compiled by John Brown, on the current state of Global/World church relationships. When assessing how Global churches and mission agencies had restructured over the years, he noted that ‘there exists a variety of relationships in mission between churches:

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<sup>66</sup> ‘Bangalore Consultation’, p. 285.

<sup>67</sup> ‘Bangalore Consultation’, p. 285.

<sup>68</sup> ‘Bangalore Consultation’, p. 287.

<sup>69</sup> ‘Bangalore Consultation’, p. 287.

- In some places all decisions are taken by, and all power resides in a board that decides on behalf of others....
- Elsewhere, partner churches from different regions and denominations are consulted on the board's plans prior to decision making but without any voting power.
- Partner churches in the south set their own priorities and a board either of a church or group of churches in the north responds to these initiatives according to its own criteria.
- Individual representatives of the partners are sometimes co-opted onto the board's decision-making body with minority voting powers.
- Limited areas of common sharing are created, including theological consultations, personnel exchange, etc....
- A mission board is transformed by the transferring of power and funds to a common governing body, where all partners, south and north, share equally.<sup>70</sup>

While the report goes on to list a number of Global mission boards and the changes they had made, special focus was given to CEVAA and CWM since, as noted in the previous chapter, they were deemed to have made the most radical adjustments.

In discussing CEVAA, Brown states that it 'has sought to achieve the participation of all members of the community in decisions about policy and programme.... The member churches pool their resources in the service of mission; they have developed mutual aid and solidarity; together they have a strong commitment to the general society.'<sup>71</sup> That noted, however, he also lists a number of issues experienced by the churches involved, all of which were connected to Global/World church relationships:

- There is an unwillingness of churches in the north to fund programmes over which they have no control. 'Some people who give one hundred francs to a pauper want to claim the right to tell him how to spend it.' Churches in the north and some people in the south have been demanding from the churches in the south more accountability and information about how funds drawn from the community are used.
- There are strong differences of opinion within the community about the criteria that should be used in determining how funds are allocated. Churches in the south have no intention of meeting the criteria set by churches in the north....
- There is a basic mistrust of the south in the north, and vice versa. Mutual knowledge and understanding are needed.
- The overwhelming proportion of the community's financial resources comes from the churches in the north, and there is a feeling among some people in the churches of the south that the churches of the north exercise control over these resources.

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<sup>70</sup> John Brown, 'International Relationships in Mission – A Study Project' in *International Review of Mission* 86 (July 1997), p. 226.

<sup>71</sup> Brown, 'International Relationships in Mission – A Study Project', pp. 226-227.

- In spite of the fact that there has been considerable debate in the community on the issue over some years, most *envoyés* are sent from churches in the north to churches in the south.
- Churches of the south have been represented on the council by their president or general secretary. Recently, the European churches have frequently been represented by other than heads of churches, often by women – the only women on the council.<sup>72</sup>

The report also noted many successes of CWM in living out relationships of mutuality, stating that '[each] member church contributes – as it is able – to the finances of the council. Each member church shares other gifts and riches, in terms of stories, experiences, theological insights, human resources and spirituality. There is a sharing in mission by all churches.'<sup>73</sup> And while the section discussing CWM does not include any negative issues or struggles, Kai Funkschmidt, in his studies of CWM and CEVAA, lists a number. First, he notes that their parliamentary system is based on a Western form of government, stating that '[while] this model immediately appeals to a European like me, I wonder if less attention has been given to the question of how group communication and decision-making and conflict resolution work in different cultures.'<sup>74</sup> Secondly, he contends that because they pool their resources internally, they could be seen as 'discarding the possibility of ecumenical accountability outside their own immediate in-group.'<sup>75</sup> Because of wealth generated by the sale of properties, Funkschmidt says that this is especially true of CWM, for 'it greatly affected the communion's internal interaction and the members' interaction with other bodies. There was a perception by members of CWM as a particularly potent donor agency on the one hand, and a loss of interest in other relationships on the other. The hope that the new communions would help overcome the donor-recipient mentality only partly came true.'<sup>76</sup> Finally, he notes that because of the composition of their members, '[they] all remain predominantly in their own old colonial patterns by mostly linking former "mother" and "daughter" churches. Even at the time when they still accepted new members, they generally remained within their Reformed theological family.'<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Brown, 'International Relations in Mission – A Study Project', p. 227.

<sup>73</sup> Brown, 'International Relations in Mission – A Study Project', p. 228.

<sup>74</sup> Funkschmidt, 'New Models of Mission Relationship and Partnership', p. 566.

<sup>75</sup> Funkschmidt, 'New Models of Mission Relationship and Partnership', p. 567.

<sup>76</sup> Funkschmidt, 'New Models of Mission Relationship and Partnership', p. 567.

<sup>77</sup> Funkschmidt, 'New Models of Mission Relationship and Partnership', p. 568.

The point of the above discussion is not to in any way detract from what CEVAA and CWM have accomplished in their restructuring; they have been far more radical than most. The main point is that, while world ecumenical gatherings would continue to point to CEVAA and CWM as models to emulate, these organizations were not without unresolved issues of paternalism, dependency, and contentions for power. Even the most radical steps in power sharing have been difficult and these organizations continue to struggle against their own history.

At the close of his report, Brown lists a number of issues that he felt would continue to be problematic. First, while acknowledging that those involved in the ecumenical movement genuinely desire changed relationships, he asks if restructuring '[means], for some partners, simply a participation in a pie-sharing exercise? If there were not a sharing of funds involved, would the partnership lose its attractiveness?'<sup>78</sup> Secondly, Brown lists a problem that had been present for decades. In the earliest ecumenical gatherings, especially at Jerusalem (1928) and Madras (1938), the World churches had called not for partnership but for unity. One of their primary concerns was the ability to work with other churches of different traditions locally. For Brown this was still an issue:

The present partnership arrangements encourage local churches to think they can obtain resources from a partner overseas to undertake their mission tasks unilaterally, instead of being forced to talk with their immediate local partners of a different tradition, and plan mission together. So are our international networks of mission fellowship counter-productive of mission in unity?<sup>79</sup>

Lastly, Brown concedes that much education on what partnership means needed to be done in the churches of the *home base*, for '[often] the understandings of mutuality and the sharing of needs and gifts has been at a mission-board level, and the understanding of mission in congregations remains "something we do for people over there."'<sup>80</sup>

Conducted almost ten years after El Escorial, the Bangalore Consultation and Brown report served as good indicators of not only how far the ecumenical movement had come on the issue of partnership, but also how far was left to go. While various Global churches were at many different stages in their attempts to transform structures and relationships, it had to be admitted that even the most radical attempts had fallen

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<sup>78</sup> Brown, 'International Relations in Mission – A Study Project', p. 270.

<sup>79</sup> Brown, 'International Relations in Mission – A Study Project', p. 271.

<sup>80</sup> Brown, 'International Relations in Mission – A Study Project', p. 271.



short in a number of areas. And while both the consultation and the report were generally forward looking, they were both adamant that if churches did not come to terms with their history, the same issues that had been problematic over many decades would continue.

### 9.5 The Salvador Meeting of the CWME (1996)

From November 24 through December 3, 1996, 574 participants from 98 countries gathered in Brazil for a conference on world mission and evangelism. The theme of the conference, 'Called to One Hope – The Gospel in Diverse Cultures', was influenced by the impact of globalization and the imposition of Western culture as a hegemonic force, especially through mass marketing and economic policies, on non-Western cultures. Acknowledging this, the conference sought to struggle with how, in a world of many cultures, Christians could live their faith in ways that were both culturally contextual while remaining catholic and connected to the global church.<sup>81</sup> Duraisingh, noting the many countries and cultures represented at the gathering, wrote that '[this] very diversity provided an appropriate setting for the exploration of the theme of the conference; participants were not asked to leave their identities behind.'<sup>82</sup> Delegates responded to this call and made great strides in the ecumenical movement's understanding and articulation of the relationship of gospel to culture.

When seeking to understand the term 'culture', Salvador said that it 'is both a result of God's grace and an expression of human freedom and creativity. Culture is intrinsically neither good nor bad; it has the potential for both – and is thus ambiguous.'<sup>83</sup> Because of its ambiguous nature, it was stated that '[most] people would affirm that in many cultures the fruit of the Holy Spirit ... as well as the pursuit of justice in human affairs, can be identified.... All cultures, however, also exhibit evil.'<sup>84</sup> According to Matthey, acknowledging this dichotomy was a new and

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<sup>81</sup> The official report from Savlador noted that '[any] authentic understanding of the gospel is both contextual and catholic. The gospel is contextual in that it is inevitably embodied in a particular culture; it is catholic in that it expresses the apostolic faith handed down from generation to generation within the communion of churches in all places and all ages.' 'Reports from the Sections – IV: One Gospel – Diverse Expressions' in Christopher Duraisingh (ed.) *Called to One Hope – The Gospel in Diverse Cultures* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998), p. 65.

<sup>82</sup> Christopher Duraisingh, "'Laudate Omnes Gentes': The Conference Begins' in Christopher Duraisingh (ed.) *Called to One Hope – The Gospel in Diverse Cultures* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998), p. 14.

<sup>83</sup> 'Reports from the Sections – I: Authentic Witness within Each Culture' in Christopher Duraisingh (ed.) *Called to One Hope – The Gospel in Diverse Cultures* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998), p. 31.

<sup>84</sup> 'Reports from the Sections – I: Authentic Witness within Each Culture', p. 31.

important step for an ecumenical conference. For at least three decades, the WCC had encouraged churches to stand with the 'poor' against outside agents and structures of oppression. This call, however, had many times been given without critically assessing the cultures of the 'poor', seeking to identify ways in which oppressive elements existed within these communities. Salvador, on the other hand, recognizing the work and influence of feminist theologians, stated explicitly that '[every] culture carries in itself not only forces encouraging solidarity, peace, and reconciliation, but also elements of violence, contempt, and exclusion. For the first time a WCC mission conference took note of this in an emphasized public official way.'<sup>85</sup>

While noting that culture itself is neither inherently good nor bad, the conference had no option but to recognize that for generations, minority cultures had been dominated by the North, including the Global churches, stating that

[power] has often been misused to crush the identities of marginalized and excluded persons and groups. The gospel – the good news of the saving love of God for all people made known in Jesus Christ – has also been misused by dominant groups to deny or distort the identities of people and to perpetuate marginalization.<sup>86</sup>

Salvador also acknowledged that this process was now amplified by Western hegemony, stating that '[a] further element of the structural dimensions of culture is globalization ... [which] seeks to impose a single consumer identity throughout the whole world through corporate control, the media and technology. This process leads to a loss of self-identity.'<sup>87</sup> Against this history, Salvador claimed that 'mission proclaims God's intention that all – with their languages and their cultural and spiritual heritages – should be affirmed as people of worth. Christian mission ... has to do with identifying and even suffering with those whose identities have been denied.'<sup>88</sup>

In addition to issues of culture, delegates at Salvador also addressed partnership, noting that the theme of gospel and culture

compels the church to face the challenges of responsible relationships and methodologies in mission. These challenges are even more pronounced with the end of the cold war, when the dominant forces of the world seem to be imposing on all cultures values driven by a free-market economy. In today's

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<sup>85</sup> Matthey, 'Milestones in Ecumenical Missionary Thinking from the 1970s to the 1990s', p. 300.

<sup>86</sup> 'Reports from the Sections – II: Gospel and Identity in Community' in Christopher Duraisingh (ed.) *Called to One Hope – The Gospel in Diverse Cultures* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998), p. 40.

<sup>87</sup> 'Reports from the Sections – II: Gospel and Identity in Community', p. 40.

<sup>88</sup> 'Reports from the Sections – II: Gospel and Identity in Community', p. 41.

world a critical appraisal of the form and practice of mission is crucial so that competitive and divisive mission methods may be avoided.<sup>89</sup>

Interestingly, after briefly reviewing the findings of past conferences, Salvador stated that '[while] many of the convictions and commitments made in recent years have been put into action, much remains to be done.'<sup>90</sup>

Unfortunately, for the most part Salvador only offered more of the same. The report first stated what had generally been agreed on at ecumenical meetings for over three decades; namely that '[visible] signs of commitment to the goal of unity include collaboration, cooperation and networking among churches and mission agencies in the same area, across cultural and denominational boundaries, and across national and regional boundaries. ...Churches need each other both locally and globally.'<sup>91</sup> After again suggesting that mission agencies and churches should study the examples of CEVAA and CWM, it was noted that '[no] matter what the structures, churches, mission agencies and local congregations should be called to the practice of a common discipline of mutual cooperation in mission, taking into consideration various experiences and new models.'<sup>92</sup> Salvador then listed a number of 'key insights', including the need for 'mutual challenge and encouragement, the creation of "safe spaces" in which honest speaking and real listening occur, the sharing of resources in ways that promote genuine interdependence, shared decision-making..., openness and a continuing search for greater solidarity, [and] transparency and mutual accountability.'<sup>93</sup> While admittedly the idea of creating 'safe spaces' for honest dialogue was new (and would be implemented at later conferences), of course no new models or examples were offered, so again one can wonder how much difference statements like this would ultimately make. Finally, Salvador reiterated an issue addressed directly just a few months prior at Bangalore, stating that '[bilateral] denominational mission relationships have sometimes distracted churches from fostering local ecumenical relationships and ignored the local ecumenical instruments already in place.'<sup>94</sup> Churches, especially those of World Christianity, were again encouraged to seek out local solutions to local problems, cooperating with other churches and denominations which faced the same issues.

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<sup>89</sup> 'Reports from the Sections – IV: One Gospel – Diverse Expressions', p. 70.

<sup>90</sup> 'Reports from the Sections – IV: One Gospel – Diverse Expressions', p. 71.

<sup>91</sup> 'Reports from the Sections – IV: One Gospel – Diverse Expressions', p. 72.

<sup>92</sup> 'Reports from the Sections – IV: One Gospel – Diverse Expressions', p. 72.

<sup>93</sup> 'Reports from the Sections – IV: One Gospel – Diverse Expressions', pp. 72-73.

<sup>94</sup> 'Reports from the Sections – IV: One Gospel – Diverse Expressions', p. 73.

However, while the official report of the conference offered nothing new, one of the speakers, the Kenyan theologian Musimbi R.A. Kanyoro, did speak directly about both the need for changes in relationships, as well as what she saw as impediments to reaching mutuality. Noting that calls for new models of relationships had been made over a number of conferences with little success to report, she believed that churches needed to communicate and understand one another. For that to be realized, she stated that ‘the former missionizing countries need to rethink their superiority complex, and the former missionalized countries must squarely face and overcome their inferiority complex. Only then can the present monologue be turned into a dialogue on what it would take to be partners in mission.’<sup>95</sup> She then challenged all the churches concerning their complicity in the ongoing partnership problems, with especially strong words for those of Global Christianity:

Let me speak to the inferiority of the South and challenge my brothers and sisters from the North equally to make yourselves vulnerable by addressing your superiority complex. We have been and are still angry about being dominated by the North. It would be naïve simply to dismiss the past, but it would do us no good to continue this litany until doomsday. Having awakened from the slumber of considering Europe and North America as the cradle of world civilization, we must now ask ourselves what we are to do with this knowledge. How do we assist former missionaries and colonial masters to look at the world with different eyes? I am convinced that mission today calls people of the former mission fields into more responsibility than we seem to understand.<sup>96</sup>

Kanyoro admitted that while leaders from World Christianity had been issuing challenges such as hers since the time of the moratorium debate, she now saw ‘signs of willingness on both sides – but also regret that the inferiority complex of the South is fuelled by poverty in terms of material goods, money, and power.’<sup>97</sup>

When assessing the Salvador conference, there is no question that by undertaking the theme of culture, new ground was broken. First, the fact that Christianity was now a truly international faith was clearly acknowledged, for as Duraisingh noted ‘[the] voices of ... Christians in the South, indigenous peoples, women and youth are now being heard as never before; the Salvador meeting was a

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<sup>95</sup> Musimbi R.A. Kanyoro, ‘Called to One Hope: The Gospel in Diverse Cultures’ in Christopher Duraisingh (ed.) *Called to One Hope – The Gospel in Diverse Cultures* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998), p. 107.

<sup>96</sup> Kanyoro, ‘Called to One Hope: The Gospel in Diverse Cultures’, p. 107.

<sup>97</sup> Kanyoro, ‘Called to One Hope: The Gospel in Diverse Cultures’, p. 108.

clear testimony to that fact.’<sup>98</sup> In addition to these voices, it was also stated that at Salvador, delegates from the Global churches ‘acknowledged that the North Atlantic “Christendom” of an earlier day is no longer homogeneous. The traditional heartland of missionary movement to the rest of the world is itself a mission field.’<sup>99</sup> For Duraisingh, then,

Salvador ... marks a *shift in mission thinking and practice from colonial to post-colonial and from Eurocentric to polycentric*. It dramatically portrays as never before that churches around the world have reached a critical point in the movement from being more or less homogeneous in faith, worship and life to a situation of theological and liturgical heterogeneity, rooted in a profound commitment to express Christian faith and witness in terms of particular local cultural idioms.<sup>100</sup>

By celebrating this post-colonial shift, Salvador served as ‘a reminder in no uncertain terms that the process of the “vernacularization” of the gospel – the inevitable embodiment of the gospel in particular cultures, for the understanding and articulation of the Word-become-flesh – which began on the day of Pentecost, continues today in myriad ways.’<sup>101</sup>

When looking at Salvador’s contribution to the partnership discourse, Charles Klagba writes about the importance of Salvador’s acknowledgment that churches need one another, locally and globally. For him, ‘[this] declaration is a decisive turning point in the history of the ecumenical movement because it demonstrates an awareness that Christian mission is essentially and above all the mission of God (*missio Dei*).’<sup>102</sup> When recalling the ecumenical history that has been discussed thus far, this statement seems void of any historical awareness. An understanding of the churches need for one another had been discussed since at least Jerusalem (1928), and the antecedents that eventually led to the concept of mission as *missio Dei* date from the IMC meeting at Willingen (1952). Far from being a ‘turning point’, when looking at Salvador’s findings pertaining to Global/World church relations, it is evident from the discussion that, despite pronouncements to the contrary, partnership had definitely not made a post-colonial shift. The words and challenge of Kanyoro speak directly to

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<sup>98</sup> Christopher Duraisingh, ‘Preface’ in Christopher Duraisingh (ed.) *Called to One Hope – The Gospel in Diverse Cultures* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998), p. xi.

<sup>99</sup> Christopher Duraisingh, ‘Salvador: A Signpost of the New in Mission’ in Christopher Duraisingh (ed.) *Called to One Hope – The Gospel in Diverse Cultures* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998), p. 193.

<sup>100</sup> Duraisingh, ‘Salvador: A Signpost of the New in Mission’, p. 194.

<sup>101</sup> Duraisingh, ‘Preface’, p. xi.

<sup>102</sup> Charles Klagba, ‘Salvador and Relationships in Mission: Partnership in Mission’ in *International Review of Mission* 86 (January/April 1997), p. 133.

this fact, for if a seismic shift in relationships had occurred at Salvador her words would have been baseless. For all the ground gained in understanding the relationship between culture and gospel, the churches were unable to translate this into greater awareness of their histories and how these issues affected partnership. Klagba pinned very high hopes on what had been gained at Salvador, noting that '[the] summit of Salvador has incontestably traced out new paths to the churches for achieving a more authentic witness and so correcting serious errors of the past.'<sup>103</sup> Far from being a summit, Salvador was simply another in a long line of conferences speaking the same *rhetoric* and offering the same solutions.

#### 9.6 Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches – Harare (1998)

On the fiftieth anniversary of the WCC's founding, 966 delegates representing 336 member churches gathered in Harare, Zimbabwe, for the assembly's eighth meeting. Norman Thomas notes that, while some had wanted the anniversary celebrations to take place in Amsterdam, '[when] the WCC decided four years ago to accept an invitation to Harare ... it chose to look not primarily backward at its legacy but forward into the twenty-first century....'<sup>104</sup> The theme of the assembly was 'Turn to God – Rejoice in Hope' and, according to the assembly message, was 'an invitation to look again to the very foundation of our faith and life as churches, finding there the hope that will draw us on.'<sup>105</sup> In reflecting on the theme, however, Kosuke Koyama stated that in the present world, 'Rejoice in Hope' was a very difficult task:

'Rejoice in Hope.' How strange this sounds! ... We live in a world so shattered and broken by violence. The 'whole inhabited world' (oikoumene) is full of the desperately poor, starving children, people uprooted from their homes, and innocent victims of war and ethnic conflict. The threat of nuclear extinction still hangs like a cloud on our horizon and our planet is in the grip of an ecological crises. How can we rejoice in hope?<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Klagba, 'Salvador and Relationships in Mission: Partnership in Mission', p. 137.

<sup>104</sup> Norman E. Thomas, 'The Future of Ecumenical Mission: An Assessment of the WCC's Harare Assembly' in *Missiology* 2 (April 2000), p. 179.

<sup>105</sup> 'Being Together under the Cross in Africa: The Assembly Message' in Diane Kessler (ed.) *Together on the Way: Official Report of the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999), p. 1.

<sup>106</sup> Kosuke Koyama, 'Rejoice in Hope' in Diane Kessler (ed.) *Together on the Way: Official Report of the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999), p. 38.

According to Kessler, Koyama's comments were relevant because, '[in] one way or another, throughout the whole assembly, delegates struggled to answer this question.'<sup>107</sup>

Since the last assembly at Canberra in 1991 had taken place too soon after the end of the Cold War for any thorough analysis of its affects, one of the issues for delegates at Harare was assessing the impact of the sociopolitical changes associated with globalization on the ecumenical movement. In Harare's official report, Kessler notes that '[through] changes in transportation, technology, communications, economics and finance, the world and its creatures are increasingly interdependent and closely connected. This fact is part of our lives in new ways. At the same time that ethnicity and border consciousness are on the rise, boundaries we used to take for granted have been transcended.'<sup>108</sup> However, while realizing that radical global changes were taking place, the report also notes that '[it] is hard to anticipate what all this means – for good and for ill, especially for increasingly interwoven economies....'<sup>109</sup> Ipe Joseph, in reflecting on Harare's position, wrote sadly that '[if] we are to believe that God is on the side of the poor, we have to be ashamed of the paradoxical experience of the rich becoming richer and the poor poorer while the church is endorsing this process or standing helpless before it. The assembly showed great concern about it, but it was unfortunate that it could not articulate specific strategies to overcome the situation.'<sup>110</sup> He then noted that '[the] reason for this lapse maybe our unwillingness to reach out for each other in an assembly where the debtors and creditors were seated next to each other.'<sup>111</sup>

As noted earlier, the WCC's fiftieth anniversary was not simply a time to recall ecumenical successes of the past. Instead, in his report to the assembly, Konrad Raiser used the concept of an 'ecumenical jubilee' as a means of reflection and 'an opportunity for seeking to discern the present challenges facing the ecumenical

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<sup>107</sup> Diane Kessler, 'Harare 1998: An Introduction and Personal Perspective' in Diane Kessler (ed.) *Together on the Way: Official Report of the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999), p. 13.

<sup>108</sup> Kessler, 'Harare 1998: An Introduction and Personal Perspective', p. 26.

<sup>109</sup> Kessler, 'Harare 1998: An Introduction and Personal Perspective', p. 26.

<sup>110</sup> Ipe Joseph, 'Mission – Through the Eyes of Harare' in *International Review of Mission* 88 (January/April 1999), p. 27.

<sup>111</sup> Joseph, 'Mission – Through the Eyes of Harare', p. 27.

movement and to look forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.’<sup>112</sup> However, remembering the mistakes of the past as well as the many resolutions and good intentions that were never followed up with actions, Raiser asked ‘[but] are we ready to celebrate this ecumenical jubilee? Are we prepared to turn to God, to receive God’s offer of reconciliation and thus be released from the institutional captivities which prevent us from living visibly the koinonia which we affirm as God’s gift in Jesus Christ?’<sup>113</sup> To open up the possibility of true dialogue and encounter between churches, Raiser suggested that the WCC should be a place which opens ‘ecumenical space’, noting that ‘[the] church’s unity must be of such a kind that there is *ample space* for diversity and for the open mutual confrontation of differing interests and convictions.’<sup>114</sup>

Raiser believed the concept of ‘ecumenical space’ could have a direct impact on the partnership discourse. As he noted, much of the emphasis of the past years had concentrated on structures and not relationships, which to him caused division rather than mutuality:

Many churches today, ...under the pressure of internal and external challenges, are withdrawing behind confessional and institutional lines of defense. Ecumenical partnerships with other churches too often remain formal, rarely leading to the encounter of life with life. As the sharing of resources becomes professionalized, ecumenical bonds of solidarity grow weaker.<sup>115</sup>

He hoped that by introducing the concept of ‘space’, the ecumenical movement could recapture the sense of the pilgrim people of God, of churches on the way together, ready to transcend the boundaries of their history and tradition, listening together to the voice of the Shepherd, recognizing and resonating with each other as those energized by the same Spirit. The WCC as a fellowship of churches marks the space where such risky encounter can take place, where confidence and trust can be built and community can grow.<sup>116</sup>

Enough searching for appropriate structures and new models had already taken place. By using terms such as ‘space’ and ‘pilgrim people’, Raiser was attempting to put the emphasis back on relationships, hoping that moving forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, churches could be more than just partners, but, remembering Azariah’s famous words at Edinburgh a century prior, ‘friends’.

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<sup>112</sup> Konrad Raiser, ‘Report of the General Secretary’ in Diane Kessler (ed.) *Together on the Way: Official Report of the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999), p. 84.

<sup>113</sup> Raiser, ‘Report of the General Secretary’, p. 88.

<sup>114</sup> Raiser, ‘Report of the General Secretary’, p. 92.

<sup>115</sup> Raiser, ‘Report of the General Secretary’, p. 92.

<sup>116</sup> Raiser, ‘Report of the General Secretary’, p. 93



Apart from Raiser's usage, the Harare assembly also introduced a new way of opening space for dialogue and debate for those in attendance. These open spaces were called the *Padare*, a Shona term that translates as 'meeting place', and signified the place 'where traditional Zimbabweans came together to receive and share wisdom, especially concerning matters relating to the community.'<sup>117</sup> According to Thomas, '[at] Harare any group approved by a national council of churches was free to present. The brick campus was interspersed with tents so that there could be over 400 presentations by member churches and ecumenical organizations.'<sup>118</sup> When reviewing the success of these 'open spaces', the Harare's official report states that

[the] results of the effort were uneven. Some events were cancelled because too few participants had registered. Others attracted 50, 60, 70 or more people, and generated enthusiastic responses. ...All in all, they were designed to give voice to the churches' concerns and priorities. They were free-wheeling, energy-generating, mind-expanding, grassroots-driven leavening agents pervading the deliberations in imperceptible but tangible ways.<sup>119</sup>

This idea of opening space for discussion and debate would continue at later meetings and provide a forum for many participants to actively engage with one another.

Delegates at Harare also reflected on changes in the WCC's work in *development*, referred to as *diakonia* (service). The assembly's preparatory material noted that '[the] idea of Christian service or *diakonia* has evolved over the years as the churches have gained new experiences and faced new situations of human need.'<sup>120</sup> In reflecting on these, the moderator's report stated that '[radical] changes in the life of the churches and societies, and emerging new realities have led the Council to a holistic and integrated approach to *diakonia*. The nature and goal of *diakonia* have been redefined and new models and methods have been developed.'<sup>121</sup> These new strategies referred to decisions taken at a WCC consultation in 1995 to restructure and place diakonial concerns under the auspices of a new program unit called Service and Sharing (Unit IV), as well as a new plan of sharing resources called 'Strategy for Jubilee'.

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<sup>117</sup> Thomas, 'The Future of Ecumenical Mission: An Assessment of the WCC's Harare Assembly', p. 180.

<sup>118</sup> Thomas, 'The Future of Ecumenical Mission: An Assessment of the WCC's Harare Assembly', p. 180.

<sup>119</sup> Kessler, 'Harare 1998: An Introduction and Personal Perspective', p. 16.

<sup>120</sup> 'Jubilee People' in *From Canberra to Harare: An Illustrated Account of the Life of the World Council of Churches, 1991-1998* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998), p. 36.

<sup>121</sup> 'The Work of the WCC: Past, Present, and Future' in Diane Kessler (ed.) *Together on the Way: Official Report of the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999), p. 57.

Again, as the preparatory materials note, '[the] theme of jubilee was the topic of a good deal of reflection within the WCC throughout this period. Its source is the biblical legislation, recorded in Leviticus 25....'<sup>122</sup> The new plan incorporated four focus areas on which the WCC should concentrate its efforts, including '(1) working with marginalized and excluded for more just sharing of resources and alternative models of cooperation; (2) practical actions of solidarity; (3) capacity-building and empowerment within communities; and (4) networking and advocacy to enable communities to speak for themselves.'<sup>123</sup> Through focusing on these areas through the lens of the concept of jubilee, the WCC was continuing their effort to separate its *diakonial* efforts from Western style development with its unavoidable dichotomy between 'donors' and 'recipients'.

When looking at its lasting impact, Joseph asks 'Did you expect Harare to develop a new ecumenical blueprint for mission for the twenty-first century? I hope not.'<sup>124</sup> But while no concrete plans for the future we put forth, the Harare assembly is important for a number of reasons. First, the concept of 'ecumenical space', as well as the use of *Padare*, put a special emphasis on relationships and dialogue, something that had been missing at past meetings. Secondly, the work done by those involved with *diakonia* showed the WCC's continued commitment to move away from the traditional understanding of development towards a more holistic, participatory way of service. Finally, however, the importance of Harare can be seen not so much in what was accomplished as what was anticipated.

Looking back over the past century, Christianity had gone from being a religion of the West to being a truly international faith, and this was to have implications for the WCC and its constituent members. As Raiser noted, '[the] future of Christianity and of the ecumenical movement is likely to be shaped and influenced more in regions like Africa and Latin America than in the northern regions of historic Christianity.'<sup>125</sup> But while this is no doubt true, Mercy Oduyoye questioned what kind of shape and influence Africa could have, given its history of being exploited for the benefit of others. She stated that '[today] what fills me with fear and trembling is that Africa is perceived and treated as marginal in all spheres of world concerns

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<sup>122</sup> 'Jubilee People', p. 36.

<sup>123</sup> 'Jubilee People', p. 36.

<sup>124</sup> Joseph, 'The Future of Ecumenical Mission: An Assessment of the WCC's Harare Assembly', p. 182.

<sup>125</sup> Konrad Raiser, 'Report of the General Secretary', p. 84.

except as a source of wealth for others and in matters of faith.’<sup>126</sup> Not wanting African spirituality and faith to simply be another exported commodity, she wondered ‘[how] can Christianity in spite of its 19<sup>th</sup>-century legacy of Western impact become a frame of reference for the expression of African ideals of life?’<sup>127</sup> With this question in mind, Oduyoye challenged all Africans, especially women, to recall and reclaim their Christian history and heritage, for she charged that Africans were not simply recipients of an outside faith, but active agents in its propagation: ‘We took part in evangelizing Africa, right from the inception of Christianity as well as during later centuries. It is our duty to identify our contribution to help posterity build up their self-esteem.’<sup>128</sup> As her ancestors had been active agents in the spread of Christianity, she encouraged her African listeners to continue to seek ways of owning and shaping their faith, adding their contribution to the Christian story: ‘We have become heavily Christianized; could we engage in influencing the shape of global Christianity or at least develop our own distinctive African practice and articulation of the faith? Perhaps others may find ours speaking to them.’<sup>129</sup> As a new century dawned, the center of international Christianity had moved South. For the first time, hope was being voiced that Global Christianity’s theological hegemony could be ending and a truly international, polycentric, and inclusive Christianity might take its place.

### 9.7 The Athens Meeting of the CWME (2005)

From May 9-16, 2005, over 650 delegates from 105 countries gathered in Athens for the thirteenth Conference on World Mission and Evangelism. The theme of the conference was ‘Come Holy Spirit – Heal and Reconcile!’, and at the conference all discussions focused on the concepts of identity affirmation and reconciliation. When looking at the state of the world, delegates noted that

[the] bipolar political and economic ideology of the cold war era has given way to a mono-polar, neo-liberal ideology, in which ‘market’ becomes the unique reference all over the world and the sole measure of judging values, social achievements and even human beings and communities themselves. The direction of the market determines the destiny of people. Market decides one’s dignity and identity. Those unable to compete in the market are thrown

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<sup>126</sup> Mercy Oduyoye, ‘From Cover to Core: A Letter to My Ancestors’ in Diane Kessler (ed.) *Together on the Way: Official Report of the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999), p. 217.

<sup>127</sup> Oduyoye, ‘From Cover to Core: A Letter to My Ancestors’, p. 217.

<sup>128</sup> Oduyoye, ‘From Cover to Core: A Letter to My Ancestors’, p. 221.

<sup>129</sup> Oduyoye, ‘From Cover to Core: A Letter to My Ancestors’, p. 221.

out of the mainstream. Indigenous communities, to whom the culture of competition is completely alien, find themselves outside the mainstream.<sup>130</sup>

In such a world, it was believed that the theme of the Holy Spirit ‘offers a trinitarian framework for a mission of identity affirmation. The social vision of the Holy Trinity allows for diversities and particularities to co-exist.... Plurality is avowed when particularities are celebrated.’<sup>131</sup> While seeking to affirm a diversity of identities, given the international context, Athens stated that ‘in the contemporary global scenario, characterized by the forces of unjust divisions and fragmentation, the theme of reconciliation and healing has much relevance.’<sup>132</sup>

Although much has been written in the last few years on the issue of reconciliation, Athens relied heavily on the work of Robert Schreiter for its understanding.<sup>133</sup> For Schreiter, the world had profoundly changed after the end of the Cold War and was now characterized by economic globalization, ethnic conflicts, disease, and ecological degradation. While pointing to the work of David Bosch in introducing the concept of ‘paradigm shifts’ in mission theory and practice, Schreiter was convinced that, ‘[from] a Christian and theological perspective, reconciliation and healing constitute a paradigm for mission ... in the present time.’<sup>134</sup> Klaus Schäfer agreed with Schreiter’s analysis of the changed world situation, noting recent changes in the world. First, he acknowledged ‘a series of positive developments in society that have come about since the political turning point in 1989, symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall. This year not only brought about the beginning of the end of the totalitarian states of the so-called Eastern bloc..., it also brought the wind of

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<sup>130</sup> George Mathew Nalunnakkal, ‘Come Holy Spirit, heal and reconcile. Called in Christ to be reconciling and healing communities’ in *International Review of Mission* 94 (January 2005), pp. 10-11.

<sup>131</sup> Nalunnakkal, ‘Come Holy Spirit, heal and reconcile. Called in Christ to be reconciling and healing communities’, p. 11.

<sup>132</sup> Nalunnakkal, ‘Come Holy Spirit, heal and reconcile. Called in Christ to be reconciling and healing communities’, p. 14.

<sup>133</sup> For more on Schreiter’s understanding of ‘reconciliation’, cf., *Reconciliation: Mission and Ministry in a Changing Social Order* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1992); *The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality and Strategies* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1998). For other authors who have written on this issue, cf., Gregory Baum and Harold Wells (eds.) *The Reconciliation of Peoples: Challenge to the Churches* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Press, 1997); John W. DeGruchy, *Reconciliation: Restoring Justice* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002); Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996); *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006). For books specifically regarding reconciliation in the South African context, cf., Michael Battle, *Reconciliation: The Ubuntu Theology of Desmond Tutu* (Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 1997); Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (New York: Doubleday, 1999).

<sup>134</sup> Robert J. Schreiter, ‘Reconciliation and Healing as a Paradigm for Mission’ in *International Review of Mission* 94 (January 2005), p. 82.

democratization to other parts of the world.’<sup>135</sup> However, Schäfer also recognized many negative changes, including economic globalization. In fact, he noted that

further developments have made the world situation appear today even more complex than it did twenty years ago.... It is not only that violent regimes have fallen, but that new forms of violence along ethnic, national, cultural, and religious lines have emerged. The wars in the former Yugoslavia, and the terrible conflicts in central Africa, as well as the events of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 in the U.S.A., and the following so-called ‘war against terrorism’ are the best-known examples of new forms of violence.<sup>136</sup>

For Schäfer, ‘without a decisive and credible will to bring about policies of reconciliation, no future can be won in our global village.’<sup>137</sup>

While the issue of partnership was not discussed widely at Athens, Valdir Raul Steuernagel did touch on it, noting the changing dynamics in the relations between the Global and World churches. For Steuernagel, if the reconciliation paradigm was going to have any affect on the partnership discourse, the Global and World churches would have to be clear and honest in their understanding of history. After acknowledging that the spectacular growth of the World churches, he wrote that ‘[it] was my perception that the dynamic of those churches and of their emerging movement was not quite at home at the Conference in Athens. If I could speak figuratively, I would say that I heard the word “imperialism” too many times and the word “paternalism” too few times.’<sup>138</sup> Steuernagel perceived that, although the growth and influence of the World churches has only been a reality for the past few decades, these churches were being judged by Global Christians through the lens of two hundred years of missionary history:

The approach of mission yesterday, as expression of imperialism, is still being used to evaluate today’s practice of mission as well as to justify a “mission unbelief” in the Western churches. This shows a serious unwillingness to move away from its own cultural captivity, not expressing a joyous willingness to join the lively churches in quite many places of today, particularly in the South.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Klaus Schäfer, ‘Come Holy Spirit, Heal and Reconcile! Called in Christ to be Reconciling and Healing Communities: On the Way to the Twelfth World Mission Conference’ in *International Review of Mission* 94 (January 2005), p. 136.

<sup>136</sup> Schäfer, ‘Come Holy Spirit, Heal and Reconcile!’, p. 138.

<sup>137</sup> Schäfer, ‘Come Holy Spirit, Heal and Reconcile!’, p. 138.

<sup>138</sup> Valdir Raul Steuernagel, ‘Reflections on the Athens Conference’ in *International Review of Mission* 94 (July 2005), p. 433.

<sup>139</sup> Steuernagel, ‘Reflections on the Athens Conference’, p. 433.

And while the Global churches were judging these newer Christian movements, Steuernagel believed that ‘paternalism keeps being a practice. Paternalism, even in the way mission is looked at. ...A paternalism which still exists within an old church structure heavily kept alive for economic reasons and ... working with an agenda which lacks more self-criticism and willingness for conversion while enjoying to evaluate the life and problems of “those others down there.”’<sup>140</sup> This paternalism notwithstanding, Steuernagel believed that as the World churches continue to grow and take more initiative, they would need the assistance of Global Christianity, not in financial terms, but in the sharing of experience:

Mine is a voice from the South, and should be looked at as a plea for help and for partnership. There is no illusion that the churches of the South are more democratic and the emerging mission movement less imperialistic. Paternalism is certainly not a temptation and a reality of the West only. ...It is precisely because some Western churches have so many and so much experience that we need their presence and coaching. However, for that partnership to be built and for that trust to be cultivated there must be a climate of mutual acceptance and respect as well as evidence of the necessity and the relevance of the mission in our world today, be it in the North or South, in the West or in the East.<sup>141</sup>

Steuernagel’s assessment is important for a number of reasons. After noting that delegates from the World churches ‘did not feel quite at home’ in Athens, he points to continued imperialism and Global church dominance in world mission today. After all the conferences, *rhetoric*, and calls for ‘partnership in obedience’, the attitudes and arrogance of many in the Global churches continue to be a problem. However, this very fact can cause one to question his call for partnership, based on mutual acceptance and respect. Despite the fact that the challenge to move from paternalism to partnership was made over seventy-five years ago, it has still not been heeded. With most Christians alive today finding their home in the World churches, these churches will continue to demand greater respect and space to express their own theologies, styles of worship, and strategies for mission. If attitudes of Global church imperialism, especially in the *home base*, continue in this new context, any hope of living relationships of mutuality and partnership seem remote at best.

The majority of delegates in Athens openly accepted reconciliation as a new mission paradigm, stating that they

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<sup>140</sup> Steuernagel, ‘Reflections on the Athens Conference’, p. 433.

<sup>141</sup> Steuernagel, ‘Reflections on the Athens Conference’, p. 433.

were deeply aware of the new challenges that come from the need for reconciliation between East and West, North and South.... We have become painfully aware of the mistakes of the past, and pray that we may learn from them. We have become conscious of our own tendency to reinforce barriers by excluding and marginalizing on grounds such as race, caste, gender, disability, or by tolerating the continuation of oppressive practices within our own societies and our own churches.<sup>142</sup>

However, while reconciliation as a paradigm has many attractions, there are still areas of weakness. First, Michael Kinnamon notes that there are indeed places where mission as reconciliation makes sense, such as 'Rwanda, and South Africa, in the Balkans and Central America – places that are striving to pick up the pieces in the aftermath of long-term oppression and horrific violence.'<sup>143</sup> However, Kinnamon also asks if the concept of reconciliation fits all situations. In the pre-conference materials, it was noted that in the current global geopolitical situation,

[globalization] ... under the pretext of breaking down barriers, especially trade barriers, is actually erecting new walls of First World hegemony, walls that exclude the Third World, and walls of new-colonialism. The economic policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) [and] the World Bank (WB) are some of the present day incarnations of the age-old bulwarks of division and exclusion of the poor. Even the 'new war of America', allegedly against terrorism, is nothing except a reinforcement of a new type of globalization that globalizes the American, imperial notion of violence. Anything that disturbs the American capitalist and colonial order is branded as terrorism.<sup>144</sup>

In the face of this reality, Kinnamon states that '[many] ecumenically-engaged Christians in my setting feel a calling, a responsibility, to *confront* a government bent on military response to perceived threats, corporations apparently unattentive to the human cost of their decisions, and a society captive to the idolatry of consumption. I left Athens asking: Is reconciliation and healing the right mission paradigm for us?'<sup>145</sup> In addition to this insight, an observation by Dieter Becker is important, for he notes that reconciliation requires honesty and truth: '[Truth-telling], the pursuit of justice, rebuilding of relationships, healing of memories, repentance, conversion and forgiveness is backed by practical experience of processes of social change and renewal. In many cases reconciliation cannot begin until the truth, or at least some

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<sup>142</sup> 'A Letter from Athens' in *International Review of Mission* 94 (July 2005), p. 323.

<sup>143</sup> Kinnamon, 'Report on the World Mission Conference, Athens 2005' in *International Review of Mission* 94 (July 2005), pp. 391-392.

<sup>144</sup> Nalunnakkal, 'Come Holy Spirit, heal and reconcile. Called in Christ to be reconciling and healing communities', p. 15.

<sup>145</sup> Kinnamon, 'Report on the World Mission Conference, Athens 2005', p. 392.

important elements of it, have been laid bare.’<sup>146</sup> While reconciliation may indeed be a new mission paradigm, it will require more honesty, truth-telling, openness to change, and transparency than most churches and mission organizations until now have shown.

#### 9.8 Ninth Assembly of the World Council of Churches – Porto Alegre (2006)

From February 14-23, 2006, over 700 delegates descended on the city of Porto Alegre in Brazil for the ninth assembly of the World Council of Churches. The theme of the assembly was ‘God, in Your Grace, Transform the World.’ According to the presentation to the assembly by the General Secretary, Samuel Kobia, the world was in definite need of transformation:

God had given us the gift of life and we have abused it. Human greed and thirst for power have created structures that cause people to live in poverty and systematically undermine the basis of life.... Globalization both brings us closer together than ever before – and exacerbates disparities of power and wealth. Violence continues to cause untold suffering.... Asymmetries of power are manifest in a thousand ways – between people, between communities, between countries. The litany of sins and suffering could go on and on.<sup>147</sup>

In the face of these evils, Archbishop Anastasios stated that the theme served as a petition for God’s presence and strength. However, he also noted that ‘in our petition, “God in your grace, transform the world,” the immediate response that we receive is: But I want you to be with me! Your place is not to be spectators of divine interventions and actions, but co-workers.... All of us, then, who belong to him have both the privilege and the obligation to share actively in the transformation of the world.’<sup>148</sup> In reflecting on the theme of transformation, Robina Marie Winbush also noted the importance of the city in which delegates met, stating that ‘[we] are meeting in the same location as the World Social Forum that has previously declared, “Another World is Possible.” As people of faith – as those who claim the name of the anointed one, Jesus of Nazareth – we come to give spiritual testimony to the truth. Another world really is possible.’<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Dieter Becker, ‘Listener’s Report’ in *International Review of Mission* 94 (July 2005), p. 359.

<sup>147</sup> Samuel Kobia, ‘Celebrating Life – a fiesta da vida’ in *The Ecumenical Review* 58 (January/April 2006), p. 33.

<sup>148</sup> Archbishop Anastasios, ‘Opening Sermon’ in *The Ecumenical Review* 58 (January/April 2006), p. 8.

<sup>149</sup> Robina Marie Winbush, ‘The Healing of the Nations’ in *The Ecumenical Review* 58 (January/April 2006), p. 17.



Although Porto Alegre did not address partnership directly, there was a distinct emphasis on transforming churches and their relationships to one another. And when thinking about these relationships, as at past conferences the growth of World Christianity was emphasized. Kobia noted that

[we] live in a world of proliferating Christian churches and ... a shift in the centre of Christianity towards the South.... In mainline Western churches that have been a mainstay of ecumenical councils, we find complex patterns of shifting membership and renewal. A clear vision of what these churches may become is still emerging. All of these trends and uncertainties have made the ecumenical movement fragile.<sup>150</sup>

In noting this growth, Kobia also stated that those in the Global churches needed to transform the way they viewed World Christianity: '[It] is ... necessary to understand the emerging ... Southern Christianity is not just a transplant of Christendom of yester-centuries. ...What ... this challenges us to do is to see our faith in a radically new perspective. This we could do if we consider Christianity as a global reality, i.e. seeing it with new eyes and not just with the eyes of one particular region or theological perspective.'<sup>151</sup> Kobia also believed that this transformation in the way churches view one another was vital if they wanted to make a difference in transforming the world:

We will be best equipped to promote human relationships in the world around us if as churches we shall learn how to share with one another all the gifts of grace which we have received from God. To a very large extent our disunity as churches is due to our incapacity to practise this genuine sharing of gifts.... A new paradigm of being church to each other is an imperative in the 21<sup>st</sup> century work on ecumenical and ecclesial relationships. This is needed for churches' self-empowerment, not for their own sake, but for the sake of each other and in order to gain the capacity to contribute to the world in dire need of learning to build better ways of relating.<sup>152</sup>

In looking at ways in which the churches needed to transform, Namsoon Kang discussed what she called the 'Peter Pan syndrome', stating that

being an adult means to grow, to change, to take responsibility. Those who are trapped in the 'Peter Pan syndrome' just want to enjoy receiving the tangible, materialized blessing from God but continue to refuse to take any responsibility for making commitment to justice, peace, and equality of society..... Transforming the church requires overcoming a 'religious Peter

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<sup>150</sup> Kobia, 'Celebrating Life – a fiesta da vida', p. 31.

<sup>151</sup> Kobia, 'Celebrating Life – a fiesta da vida', p. 44.

<sup>152</sup> Kobia, 'Celebrating Life – a fiesta da vida', p. 40.

Pan syndrome', changing their perspective of human being, of the world and God, taking responsibility for the world....<sup>153</sup>

One will find here no wonderfully worded resolutions on partnership; no, Porto Alegre's tone on these issues was considerably different than at previous conferences. While in the past there had been much discussion and many resolutions on the specifics of structural changes, at Porto Alegre what was brought forth was a humble petition and prayer for transformation. Instead of seeking to change systems and policies, in this new and constantly evolving ecclesial world, what was sought was the ability to transform churches and relationships.

As at Harare, Porto Alegre sought to 'open space' for people to dialogue and learn from one another. What Harare termed the *Padare* those in Porto Alegre called *mutirão*, a Brazilian word meaning 'a meeting place, an opportunity to work together for a common purpose, a space to discuss and argue with each other in building a common dream.'<sup>154</sup> By creating a forum for sharing and learning, it was hoped that 'participation in the assembly would be a process of conscientisation – a concept WCC learned from the great Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire....'<sup>155</sup> According to Oxley, there were a number of benefits in including the *mutirão* experiences. First, it 'demonstrated the potential of creating space for people to experience, relate and learn together.'<sup>156</sup> Second, Oxley noted that the *mutirão* 'demonstrated a commitment and vitality in the ecumenical movement which the institutional WCC has not always reflected. ...The WCC needs to use the methodology ... to continue to draw on and encourage that vitality.'<sup>157</sup> Finally, it

demonstrated that having limited resources can open the way to creative partnerships. Having a sufficiency of resources can lead of a mentality of having a sufficiency of thinking – an attitude that says 'if you want to work with us you have to do it our way'. We could not have provided the *mutirão* without real and trusting collaboration with partners. It was a richer experience for their thinking as well as their labour.<sup>158</sup>

For the future of partnership, it may be helpful to consider Oxley's thoughts on the *mutirão*, especially if creating this kind of 'open space' opens up opportunities for

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<sup>153</sup> Namsoon Kang, 'God in Your Grace, Transform Our Churches' in *The Ecumenical Review* 58 (January/April 2006), p. 134.

<sup>154</sup> Simon Oxley, 'What Can We Learn from the Mutirão?' in *The Ecumenical Review* 58 (January/April 2006), p. 22.

<sup>155</sup> Oxley, 'What Can We Learn from the Mutirão', p. 23.

<sup>156</sup> Oxley, 'What Can We Learn from the Mutirão', p. 26.

<sup>157</sup> Oxley, 'What Can We Learn from the Mutirão', p. 26.

<sup>158</sup> Oxley, 'What Can We Learn from the Mutirão', p. 26.

churches and individuals to get out from under institutional structures and be able to work with partners in ‘real and trusting collaboration’.

In looking at the importance of Porto Alegre, Kobia stated that, ‘[just] as in Amsterdam, we too are on the threshold of a new era, conscious of the enormous gap between God’s will for humanity and the present reality.’<sup>159</sup> And just as those at Amsterdam were entering a new phase of ecumenical cooperation, Porto Alegre realized that immense changes are currently ongoing as well. The preparatory material for the assembly noted that

[in] recent years the ecumenical landscape has changed dramatically. New partners have emerged, and new partnerships have been formed. ...In response to the new situation, many ... are seeking new models and possibilities for living their ecumenical commitment in today’s world. They are exploring a ‘reconfiguration’ of the ecumenical movement, not just a rearranging of the present landscape but a new way of understanding of one body and many members.<sup>160</sup>

The fact that those involved in the ecumenical discourse are not simply seeking to adjust structures, but are instead in the search of transformed relationships and the ‘reconfiguration’ of the ecumenical movement may be the most hopeful sign for partnership in a very long time.

### 9.9 Back to Edinburgh Again in 2010

The ecumenical movement will soon mark the centenary celebration of the first world ecumenical conference at Edinburgh. In the last century much has changed. The positivism and confidence felt early on melted away quickly in the face of two world wars and a worldwide depression. The Cold War divisions that disappeared in 1989 did not usher in an era of peace and prosperity, but instead have increased the world’s fragmentation and the economic disparities between peoples. And while at Edinburgh delegates had no reason to question the legitimacy and power of Christendom, today the focal point of Christianity has moved South to the World churches, and every year thousands of migrants from the South take their faith with them as they move North. However, in spite of these changes, the ecumenical movement that vowed to stay together at Amsterdam has in fact done just that, not only surviving but growing to incorporate churches of all colors and creeds into one

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<sup>159</sup> Kobia, ‘Celebrating Life – fiesta da vida’, p. 36.

<sup>160</sup> *Programme Book: Ninth Assembly, Porto Alegre, February 2006* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2006), p. 139.

ecumenical fellowship. And while this fact should be celebrated, it must also be admitted that although partnership between the churches of Global and World Christianity has been part of ecumenical discussions for the past century, it is evident from this historical review that many of the same issues of power and paternalism that Edinburgh and later conferences faced are still present today.<sup>161</sup> Despite the efforts of many committed to equality, solidarity, and mutuality, after a century of seeking partnership, Global/World partnerships are still, in many instances, fractured and marred by abuses and inequalities of power.

#### 9.10 Tracing the Four Themes

As the historical narrative ends, it is obvious that none of the four themes that we are tracing, all of which are barriers to living out partnership, has been resolved. When looking at the issue of the *home base*, the Bangalore Consultation and related Brown report stated clearly that while partnership as mutuality and solidarity was understood and desired by Global church leaders and mission boards, the vast majority of Global Christians continued to understand mission as expansion. Seeming to contradict this assertion, the CWME meeting at Salvador a year later celebrated that due to the spectacular growth of World Christianity, mission was finally moving from being colonial to post-colonial and Eurocentric to polycentric. However, almost a decade later, at Athens (2005) the CWME could still state that despite the growth of World Christianity, most in the *home base* refused to adjust to these new realities and still considered mission something that Global Christians do *to* others, not *with* them.

In the area of *humanitarianism* and *development*, Canberra (1991) continued to affirm what Nairobi had said sixteen years earlier; namely, that since Western style development was continuing to widen the gap between the materially rich and poor, churches needed to stop focusing on development as ‘growth’. Instead, Canberra insisted that development must center on helping people experience ‘meaningful lives’. Similarly, the Harare Assembly in 1998 instituted new programs to assist Global churches in seeing development as sharing between partners instead of a relationship between donors and recipients. However, many in the Global churches

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<sup>161</sup> In fact, the location of Edinburgh’s centenary celebrations has itself been a highly contested issue as some involved with its planning called for hosting to be undertaken by one of the cities within the countries of the historic World churches.

continue to have difficulty with this shift in focus, seeing Global churches *humanitarian* efforts as assisting others in becoming more like us.

The matter of external power, while touching all of the themes, continued to primarily affect the issue of *authority*. While Canberra (1991) and the Bangalore Consultation (1995) continued to focus on structural issues internal to the churches, Bangalore also emphasized strongly that the economic inequalities between both the Global and World churches, as well as the nations in which they exist, were caused mainly by disparities of power. Another key insight from this consultation was that the main issue for all churches involved in ecumenical partnerships was historical, and that any changes in structures and relationships would have to contend with a history of inequality between the Global and World churches. Delegates at Harare (1998) put it more bluntly, stating that the reason these issues was not resolved was that, when leaders of the Global and World churches met to find solutions, the creditors and debtors sat side by side! Recent meetings such as Athens (2005) introduced the need for reconciliation; however, Global churches will have to be much more open and honest in relation to matters of power if this is to make any difference in Global/World church partnerships.

Lastly, it is obvious that in this period, as throughout the greater narrative, the *rhetoric* expressed at ecumenical assemblies and conferences very rarely made significant differences in the *reality* experienced by those involved. That noted, at Port Alegre Assembly (2006) an important shift occurred. After realizing that still unaddressed issues of power have made beautifully worded resolutions very difficult to live out, Port Alegre chose not to focus on transforming structures but instead on transforming churches and relationships. This is significant, for if those involved in the ecumenical discourse continue to focus not simply on internal structures, but instead seek transformed relationships, then the gap between what is hoped for and what is may finally begin to close.

## **Chapter 10**

### **Partnership: Historical Origins and Contemporary Themes**

As we have seen in this thesis, the concept of partnership has been used to describe the relationships between Global and World churches since the early twentieth century. Despite this long history, finding ways to actually realize relationships of equality and mutuality has proven difficult if not impossible. Over the years, much has been written, many discussions have taken place, and numerous conferences and consultations held in seeking to find answers to the problems of partnership; despite this fact, many issues concerning power and paternalism continue. In this instance, reviewing our shared history can assist us, for as stated earlier, '[historical] recollection can be an important aid in understanding current problems and difficulties in partnership relations....'<sup>1</sup> If we can seek to understand the origins of ecumenical partnerships, as well as the themes which have continued to be problematic throughout the historical narrative, maybe there is the possibility that, going forward, we can correct some of our past mistakes and begin to finally realize our goal of living in solidarity with our sisters and brothers around the world.

#### 10.1 Partnership: Overtly Colonial or Highly Contested?

We have seen that in its secular use, the term 'partnership' was a product of British colonial discourse as far back as the early years of the twentieth century. At that time, its meaning closely paralleled that of trusteeship: the understanding that, although autonomy for dependent peoples would come one day in the future, it was the West's 'sacred trust' to lead others in the process of becoming enlightened and civilized. In seeking to understand the origins of ecumenical partnerships, Bauerochse states that when the term partnership was first introduced, its use in mission paralleled its use in colonial discourse:

Both of them were concerned with gradually granting greater independence and autonomy. Both of them took their impetus separately from the emancipation movements and independence movements in the colonies. The line of conflict was also similar in both cases: while the European side saw the necessity, supported by factual information, to release the Asian or African 'partner' into independence and self-administration, at the same time they did not want to give up their power and influence entirely. Against the process of looming independence both of them argued that the overseas partners were not yet 'mature' enough....<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bauerochse, *Learning to Live Together*, p.2.

<sup>2</sup> Bauerochse, *Learning to Live Together*, pp. 92-93.

On this issue, much in the historical record supports his position. At the Ecumenical Conference of Foreign Missions in New York (1900), delegates believed that the various Global church missions were not obligated to partner with the emerging World churches; in fact, it was stated that missionaries should always be ‘strongly predominant’<sup>3</sup> In the early 1920s, Arthur Judson Brown thought that since most monies given for mission were from the churches of Global Christianity, only the representatives of Global churches had the right of financial oversight.<sup>4</sup> After World War I and the implementation of the Permanent Mandates Commission, many from the Global churches could not get away from seeing themselves as trustees over the growth and development of others, and most mission practice reflected the prevailing view among them that it was their ‘sacred trust’ to assist more ‘primitive’ peoples. As Fann T.B. Friis noted in 1929, ‘the activities of Christian missions on many points are based on principles in conformity with those approved by the League under the mandates system.’<sup>5</sup> And just as there were levels to the mandates system (A, B, and C), various peoples and cultures were viewed differently by missionaries.

During World War II, the idea of partnership became official policy of the British government, who used it to signal a relationship more advanced than that of trusteeship while still maintaining some power over colonial possessions. However, while partnership’s understanding was changing in its secular use, when delegates met at the Church Conference on African Affairs at Westerville in 1942, the African churches were deemed nowhere near ready for autonomy. Delegates, while expressing the intention of allowing Africans to make decisions regarding the direction of their churches, were also quick to note that missionaries were still necessary. To bolster the argument that missionaries were needed to help lead and direct the church, the report pointed to the deplorable state of education on the continent. Similarly, in the recorded discussions of the Westerville conference, although it was stated that racism in every form should end, the suggestion offered, moving from language of ‘superior’ and ‘inferior’ to ‘advanced’ and ‘retarded’, showed blatant paternalism.<sup>6</sup> Finally, and directly supporting Bauerochse’s thesis, while delegates believed that the nature of the relationship between colonizer and colonized should change, as with comments

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<sup>3</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, p. 283.

<sup>4</sup> Brown, ‘Present-Day Problems of the Church in the Mission Field’, p. 484.

<sup>5</sup> Finn T.B. Friis, ‘Mandates and Missions’, *International Review of Missions* 18 (1929), p. 553.

<sup>6</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 170.

regarding racism Westerville was completely captive to its colonial context, advocating that ‘the word “guardianship” is better than “trusteeship” as applied to African colonial territory as it rightly implies that the relationship is not permanent but has as its purpose the fitting of the ward for self-government as soon as his education and experience permit.’<sup>7</sup>

Thus far, we have agreed that partnership’s colonial heritage greatly affected its use in ecumenical discussions. However, Bauerochse goes on to state that it was only during and after the Whitby meeting of the IMC in 1947 that ‘the linking of the term partnership with obedience to God’s call marked a specific difference from its usage in British colonial policy.’<sup>8</sup> On this issue, the historical record is less than clear. While admittedly Whitby was an important step in the partnership discourse, history shows that, despite the examples noted above, colonial understandings were contested from the beginning of the term’s use, and the desire for the autonomy of the World churches extends back to the middle of the nineteenth century to the work and thought of Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn.

As we saw in chapter one, Anderson pushed for the autonomy of emerging World churches from an early stage. He believed that ‘[as] soon as the mission church has a native pastor, the responsibilities of self-government should be devolved upon it.’<sup>9</sup> Anderson based this belief on the teachings of Paul and was convinced that, after a church had been planted, Paul left that church to grow on its own.<sup>10</sup> Venn, Anderson’s colleague and contemporary, was famous for his insistence on the ‘euthanasia of a mission’.<sup>11</sup> Like Anderson, Venn based his beliefs on a biblical model, namely the relationship between the church in Jerusalem and its daughter church in Antioch.<sup>12</sup>

Importantly, and distinct from colonial policy which stressed that peoples should be mature enough (as judged by Western standards) to govern themselves before power could be devolved, these early missionary leaders believed that the only way for local churches to grow was to have power, authority, and leadership devolved

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<sup>7</sup> *Christian Action in Africa*, p. 171.

<sup>8</sup> Bauerochse, *Learning to Live Together*, p. 93.

<sup>9</sup> Rufus Anderson, *Foreign Missions: Their Relations and Claims* (Boston: Congregational Publishing Society, 1874), p.112.

<sup>10</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 49

<sup>11</sup> Venn, ‘The Establishment of a Native Church’, p. 63.

<sup>12</sup> Wilbert R. Shenk, *Henry Venn – Missionary Statesman* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1983), p. 29.



to them at an early stage, without putting an emphasis on the World churches necessarily showing themselves worthy, responsible, or having ‘caught up’ with the churches of Global Christianity. Therefore while admitting that its secular use originated in the colonial discourse, when injected into ecumenical discussions at the beginning of the twentieth century, the term was also infused with an alternate meaning; the ideal of relationships between autonomous churches, regardless of cultural differences, age, or maturity, being draw together by God’s Spirit.

With this background, when looking at the historical records from early twentieth century conferences, there are many examples of alternative understandings which were quite the opposite of viewing partnership as simply an extension of trusteeship. As early as New York (1900), a missionary from the Methodist Episcopal Church shared that when seeking to establish self-governing churches, the main principle governing the relationships between Global church missionaries and World Christians should be the ‘... one great word equality.’<sup>13</sup> Although this was a minority view at New York, other missionaries spoke to the importance of genuine relationships of equality and fellowship between themselves and World Christians.<sup>14</sup>

At the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh (1910), as delegates wrestled with how to react to the growth of the World churches, it was stated that ‘[the] very enunciation of the problem indicates an advanced stage of organization. The Church in the mission field had become the *predominant* partner [*italics mine*].’<sup>15</sup> When the IMC met at Jerusalem in 1928, Dr. Franklin of the American Baptist Mission is famously quoted as saying that ‘[the] hour has come for the passing *from paternalism to partnership*. It is something more than even co-operation, it is partnership that is required [*italics mine*].’<sup>16</sup> And in an address to the whole meeting, John Mott stated that his hope was that the decisions made by the delegates at Jerusalem would not be just words, but that they would be lived out so that soon all churches could be both sending and receiving.<sup>17</sup> It is important to note from statements such as these listed above that, while the term ‘partnership’ was subject to colonial interpretations, the ecumenical movement was not simply borrowing its understanding from the secular, colonial world. What Franklin, Mott and others were

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<sup>13</sup> Rev. G.B. Smyth, quoted in *New York 1900* Vol. 2, p. 283.

<sup>14</sup> Rev. S.S. Sanders, quoted in *New York 1900* Vol. 2, p. 260.

<sup>15</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: Report of Commission II*, pp. 35-36.

<sup>16</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 173.

<sup>17</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Addresses and Other Records*, p. 23.

calling for was 'equality', an 'end to paternalism', and for 'something more than even co-operation', all of which were quite different than simply advocating for relationships of trusteeship.

When reflecting on Global/World church relations at the Tambaram meeting of the IMC in 1938, a Chinese delegate, Dr. Zoo, contrasted the present world situation with the calling God put on the church, and gave a glimpse as to why partnership, at least in its ecumenical use, should not be viewed simply as an extension of trusteeship: 'That which is international starts from the fact of division – a world divided into separate states. That which is ecumenical starts from the fact of unity – the unity founded in Christ.'<sup>18</sup> For all those who were looking for hope and unity in a world of desperation and conflict, Zoo felt that the idea of an international Church could be a beacon: 'To all who are struggling to realise human brotherhood in a world where disruptive nationalism, brutal militarism and aggressive imperialism make such brotherhood seem unreal, the ecumenical Church offers not only an ideal of brotherhood to be realised at some time in the distant future, but the fact of brotherhood already realised in men united not by their aspirations but by the love of God.'<sup>19</sup> Far from being simply an ecumenical appropriation of a colonial term, partnership has been highly contested from the beginning of its usage by those who dreamed of people, Global and World Christians, 'united not by their aspirations but by the love of God.'

## 10.2 Problems with Partnership: Four Recurring Themes

Having reviewed the history of partnership, we have traced both the missiological and colonial origins of the term. This analysis has shown that the understanding and practice of ecumenical partnership has been contested, for while it was a product of colonial times and therefore captive to colonial and, later, neocolonial interpretations, some church and missionary leaders from both the Global and World churches have sought to ground it in Biblical, egalitarian, and liberationist understandings. Importantly, as this study has shown, this dichotomy in the understanding and use of partnership continues and influences our practice even today, for the presence of both interpretations has allowed people to agree on

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<sup>18</sup> Zoo, 'The Church and the International Order', p. 76.

<sup>19</sup> Zoo, 'The Church and the International Order', p. 77.

resolutions, only to discover that they differ in what the resolutions mean or how they should be applied.

The understanding of this historical background can be of value for at least two reasons. First, those today who continue to contest colonial and neocolonial interpretations and practices in Global/World church partnerships can be encouraged and learn from many who came before, and who have had a vision of partnership as relationships of sisterhood and brotherhood, ‘united ... by the love of God’. Second, having this historical awareness can also assist us as we seek to understand four issues or themes that have constantly reappeared in the narrative, issues involving power which have allowed colonial and neocolonial interpretations of partnership to persist; namely, the *home base*, *humanitarianism* and *development*, *authority*, and *rhetoric* and *reality*. It is important to note again that although each issue is listed and discussed separately, in reality they all touch, influence, and reinforce one another, each contributing in its own way to the problem of living out partnership.

#### 10.2.1 The *Home Base*

First, the issue of the *home base*, or those that make up the constituencies of the Global churches, is crucial for understanding the limits of partnership. From the late eighteenth century when mission societies were first formed, overseas mission was the purview of a small minority of Global Christians. In 1874, Rufus Anderson wrote that ‘we must charitably suppose, that the apparent insensibility of so many real Christians to the enlargement and glory of their Redeemer’s kingdom on earth, is not because their hearts are really cold and dead to the interest of that kingdom, but because they know so little about it.’<sup>20</sup> Anderson was hopeful that simply educating church members about world missions would solve this problem. Increasing education, however, did not significantly change the situation, so in 1900 John Mott could still write that ‘[the] greatest hindrances to the evangelization of the world are those within the Church.’<sup>21</sup> As we have seen in chapters one through three, these sentiments come from a time when Global church mission’s right of conquest (and the use of military language in describing it) was unquestioned.

By the Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council in 1928, the idea of partnership between Global and World churches had emerged. But when

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<sup>20</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions: Their Relations and Claims*, p. 172.

<sup>21</sup> Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, p. 49.

looking at the growing World churches and their calls for autonomy, Chirgwin notes that ‘the man in the pew is scarcely aware that they exist. In so far as he is thinking of the missionary matters at all, he is thinking in the old terms.’<sup>22</sup> For Chirgwin, if the movement made towards greater freedom for the World churches was going to be successful, the support of the general membership within Global Christianity was essential: ‘The man in the pew is therefore the man who matters. Everything depends upon whether he is hostile, indifferent or intelligently zealous. His goodwill is not enough; his informed goodwill is essential.’<sup>23</sup> However, despite the implementation of broad based educational programs for the Global churches over the next couple of decades, many of their members continued to think of mission in the ‘old terms’.

By the time of the Whitby meeting of the IMC in 1947, serious problems in this area were still noted. While advances in the understanding of partnership had continued, Whitby noted that ‘[the] propaganda which will ensure support on these new terms has hardly begun. The missionary appeal ... is being made in terms which are already out of date....’<sup>24</sup> At Willingen in 1952, it was also stated that ‘the twentieth-century mission of the Church is mainly being supported by people who still think in nineteenth-century terms. ...[One] of the large unfinished tasks lies at the “home base”.’<sup>25</sup> To address some of these issues, the New Delhi meeting of the WCC (1961) initiated a study entitled ‘The Missionary Structure of the Congregation’. The study’s official report was received at Uppsala in 1968 and noted that ‘[in] this world we need to meet others, across all the frontiers, in new relationships that mean both listening and responding, both giving and receiving.’<sup>26</sup>

However, thirty years later, despite all of these efforts, as the Bangalore Consultation of 1996 continued to wrestle with the adjustment of structures, it was noted that one of the most serious impediments to realizing partnership was the ‘traditional and ever-present understanding of mission that we find to be based on a nineteenth century missionary agenda of building outposts of sending churches, agencies and organizations.’<sup>27</sup> To address this issue, John Brown stated that there was a continued need to educate Global church members on the meaning of partnership, for ‘[often] the understanding of mutuality and sharing of needs and gifts has been at

<sup>22</sup> Chirgwin, ‘The Jerusalem Meeting and the Man in the Pew’, p. 530.

<sup>23</sup> Chirgwin, ‘The Jerusalem Meeting and the Man in the Pew’, pp. 533-534.

<sup>24</sup> Bingle, ‘The Church in its World Setting’, pp. 25-26.

<sup>25</sup> Goodall, ‘Willingen – Milestone, Not Terminus’, p. 19.

<sup>26</sup> *The Uppsala Report*, p. 33.

<sup>27</sup> ‘Bangalore Consultation’, p. 285.

a mission-board level, and the understanding of mission in congregations remains “something we do for people over there.”<sup>28</sup>

Looking back over the history of partnership, I believe strongly that the issue of the *home base* is clearly the most important to address. Putting Chirgwin’s words from 1928 into today’s more inclusive language, partnership can advance no ‘faster or further than the Churches allow.... The man (and woman!) in the pew is therefore the [one] who matters.’ Whether addressing the following issues of *humanitarianism* and *development*, *authority*, or the implementation of policies to make *rhetoric* become *reality*, without a much broader understanding by those in the pew of partnership and God’s call to live in community and solidarity with sisters and brothers around the world, very little progress or change can be expected in the way Global/World church relationships will be lived out in the future.

#### 10.2.2 Humanitarianism and Development

From the beginning of the modern missionary movement, *humanitarianism* and *development*, whether in aggressive or reformist guises<sup>29</sup>, have played a part in the motivation of missionaries and their supporters. During the first half of the nineteenth century, known as the Age of Humanitarianism, both forms of humanitarianism were clearly present. On the one hand, paternalism and feelings of cultural superiority were rife within the Protestant missionary movement. On the other hand, however, ‘humanitarians viewed the process of social transformation as conversion. They emphasized the importance of tapping the potential within an individual or a people. Such transformation had to be based on a voluntary, willed response from those being assisted.’<sup>30</sup> A perfect example of this dichotomy can be seen in the life of Rufus Anderson. Anderson had little respect for the indigenous cultures of non-Western peoples, yet he refused to equate sharing the gospel with the imposition of Western civilization, culture, or ecclesial traditions, believing that ‘[as] soon as the mission church has a native pastor, the responsibilities of self-government

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<sup>28</sup> Brown, ‘International Relations in Mission – A Study Project’, p. 271.

<sup>29</sup> As discussed in the Introduction (p. xii), aggressive humanitarianism is ‘exercised through discipline, socialization (eliciting compliance by instilling in the other a coincidence of interests and beliefs) and surveillance.’ Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, p. 202. On the other hand, reformist humanitarianism focuses on the excesses of colonialism/neo-colonialism and the exploitation of the colonized, with calls that those in power should not simply seek profit but also work for the benefit of all.

<sup>30</sup> Shenk, *Henry Venn: Missionary Statesman*, p. 106.

should be devolved upon it.’<sup>31</sup> As we have seen in this study, these two powerful currents, namely strong feelings of cultural superiority and paternalism on the one hand, and concern for protecting and respecting the autonomy and agency of non-Western peoples on the other, have continued to be lived in tension.

After World War II and with the beginning of decolonization, talk of humanitarianism was replaced by development; however, while terminology changed, both aggressive and reformist tendencies were still present. For example, a report from the WCC Assembly in Uppsala in 1968 entitled ‘World Economic and Social Development’ states that ‘[today] ... the rich countries surround themselves with protective tariffs and quotas so as to prevent exports from the third world entering their countries. We have to face the fact that a responsible policy would involve serious changes in all our countries, in our economic systems, involving painful social sacrifices during the transition period.’<sup>32</sup> The same report, however, also stated that ‘[in] order to help *these* people to emerge from *their* poverty it is not enough to send *them* food.... They need our support in order to get rid of *their* feudal agrarian system [*italics mine*].’<sup>33</sup> In other words, while the West may need to reform its systems of trade, what others really need is a partner to come and teach them the ‘right’ way to do things. The ecumenical movement, through the WCC, started programs such as Inter-Church Aid and Joint Action for Mission to enable churches to become involved in development. Interestingly, while designations such as ‘older’ and ‘younger’ and ‘sending’ and ‘receiving’ had, by this time, fallen out of favor, the development era brought about new designations: ‘supporting’ and ‘initiating’ churches; although mission was understood by this time to be ‘to six continents’, Global churches still sought to distinguish between those in need, and those who felt called to meet those needs.

From the 1970s until the present, with both the noted failure of Western-style development as well as the increased call for the churches of World Christianity to direct and control their own affairs, the ecumenical movement has by and large been directed by reformist tendencies. In the past three decades, the WCC has challenged organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, along with many of their policies such as ‘structural adjustment programs’. Against such

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<sup>31</sup> Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 112.

<sup>32</sup> *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 40.

<sup>33</sup> *The Uppsala Report*, p. 39.

agencies, focus has been put on issues of ‘sustainable development’, applying ‘appropriate technologies’, and development as increasing people’s ability to live a ‘meaningful life’. For instance, in 1980, delegates at Melbourne noted that ‘missionaries who do work among the poor must not be content to dole out charity. Nor can they engage in that kind of “development” that allows for only a limited number of the poor to join the middle-class elite without working to overcome societal injustice for the many.’<sup>34</sup> Despite this change, Melbourne could also state that many in the Global churches, especially in the United States, ‘still have not abandoned the image of missionary activity as one-way traffic. From us to them. ...From developed to underdeveloped countries....’<sup>35</sup>

Today, humanitarianism still plays a large motivating factor for those involved in mission. And while this recent shift towards reformist humanitarianism should be celebrated, it is important to acknowledge that in our globalized world, both aggressive and reformist tendencies are still part of the churches’ humanitarian response. While the last three decades have seen partnership discussions focus on mutuality, solidarity and concepts such as *koinonia*, Valdir Raul Steuernagel, at the Athens CWME meeting in 2005, has stated that in Global/World church relationships, ‘paternalism keeps being a practice. ...[A] paternalism ... working with an agenda which lacks more self-criticism and willingness for conversion while enjoying to evaluate the life and problems of “those others down there.”’<sup>36</sup> For Christians from the Global churches, acknowledging this history can be an important step in continuing to understand how issues of paternalism and feelings of cultural superiority continue to hinder our ability to experience true partnership.

### 10.2.3 Authority

As can be seen throughout the historical narrative, because of partnership’s post-Enlightenment and colonial contexts, the issue of *authority*, especially in regard to that of finances, has plagued Global/World church relationships. Although Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn advocated that churches should be self-supporting from the beginning, many of their contemporaries, as well as those that followed them as the leaders of mission societies, did not put this principle into practice. As we saw in

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<sup>34</sup> Scott, ‘The Fullness of Mission’, p. 47.

<sup>35</sup> Scott, ‘The Fullness of Mission’, p. 50.

<sup>36</sup> Steuernagel, ‘Reflections on the Athens Conference’, p. 433.

chapter two, this view was heightened during the era of high colonialism, where racism and denominationalism were rife. While most agreed that the World churches were allowed to administer funds raised locally, when it came to funds raised in the Global churches, the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions in 1900 stated that the missions ‘are not obliged ... to make the native church their *partner* in ... administration....’<sup>37</sup> Although Asian delegates at Edinburgh in 1910 argued for the right of the World churches to have some control in how monies from overseas were used, at the Jerusalem IMC meeting eighteen years later, the dispute was far from settled. When discussing the oversight of funds, Arthur Judson Brown stated that ‘it is a sound principle that money should be administered by those who are selected by the representatives of the donors.’<sup>38</sup> Over time, as we have seen, the arguments specifically relating to the control of finances were, to a certain degree, mitigated by a number of historical events, including the financial depression which caused the World churches, by necessity, to be more self-reliant, as well as growing nationalism and calls for independence by colonized peoples. As a result, new understandings and structures for sharing funds were implemented at meetings after World War II, especially at Whitby in 1947.

However, far from ending paternalism, arguments simply shifted from who administered foreign funds to whether the Global churches actually listened to and trusted the churches of World Christianity. At the Accra meeting of the IMC in 1958, it was noted that ‘[one] essential requirement of partnership is that the partner must be a true partner.... Is the partner from Asia and Africa *really* heard?’<sup>39</sup> One way the ecumenical movement attempted to promote trust and mutuality was the program Joint Action for Mission. However, as we saw in chapter six, at the Mexico City CWME meeting in 1963, a number of problems with JAM were recognized, including ‘the really radical demands for sharing of information and pooling resources ..., with the consequent need for change in existing programmes and relationships, and disturbances to vested interests of congregations, churches, and mission agencies.’<sup>40</sup>

As discussed in chapter seven, issues of *authority* were confronted directly by many leaders from the World churches, including Gatu, Nacpil, and Miguez-Bonino. As a result of their protest, in-depth studies were initiated, including the Ecumenical

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<sup>37</sup> *New York 1900* Vol. 1, pp. 282-283.

<sup>38</sup> Brown, ‘Present-Day Problems of the Church in the Mission Field’, p. 486.

<sup>39</sup> Nielson, ‘The Rôle of the IMC’, pp. 212-213.

<sup>40</sup> *Minutes of Mexico City CWME*, p. 59.



Sharing of Personnel in the 1970s and the Ecumenical Sharing of Resources in the 1980s. Unfortunately, while there is no question that much was learned from these studies, the issue of *authority* and control by Global churches must still be addressed today. As noted above, in Global/World church relations, ‘paternalism keeps being a practice.’<sup>41</sup> To add to this recent critique, Samuel Kobia, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, stated at Porto Alegre in 2006 that almost one hundred years after Edinburgh, ‘to a very large extent our disunity as churches is due to our incapacity to practise [a] genuine sharing of gifts....’<sup>42</sup> Although today we rightfully celebrate living in a post-colonial age, unless churches are willing to acknowledge that inherited issues of Global church power, paternalism, and control are still lived out in our present ecumenical relationships, partnership will be impossible to realize.

#### 10.2.4 Rhetoric and Reality

From the earliest ecumenical discussions related to partnership, many resolutions have been made and policies passed seeking changed Global/World church relationships; however, these resolutions and policies have rarely been followed up with actions. At the Jerusalem IMC meeting in 1928, the first such meeting to openly discuss partnership, Dr. Franklin of the American Baptist Mission stated that ‘[the] hour has come for the passing from paternalism to partnership.’<sup>43</sup> At that same meeting, John Mott stated that he was hopeful that decisions made would be more than just words. Today, we can be sure that Franklin and Mott would be disappointed, for the history of Global/World church relations has been fraught with unmet expectations.

Twenty years after Jerusalem, delegates at the Whitby IMC meeting in 1947 recalled that although partnership had been advocated two decades earlier, relationships had not adjusted to this new paradigm, noting that ‘[there] is perhaps no aspect of missionary policy and practice which has been the subject of more missionary discussion in recent years than that of the relationships of the older and younger churches. Nor is there any question which has been a more fruitful source of controversy and frustration.’<sup>44</sup> The controversy and frustration, however, continued, for despite resolutions made at many subsequent conferences and assemblies, not

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<sup>41</sup> Steuernagel, ‘Reflections on the Athens Conference’, p. 433.

<sup>42</sup> Kobia, ‘Celebrating Life - a fiesta da vida’, p. 40.

<sup>43</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, p. 173.

<sup>44</sup> Ranson, ‘The Whitby Meeting of the International Missionary Council’, p. 12.

much substantive change took place. For example, due to pressure from World church leaders during the moratorium debate, delegates at the Bangkok meeting of the CWME in 1973 could state that '[the] issues we are dealing with are not new. We are working on an old agenda about which much has been said but too little has been done. ...Our basic problem is how to break free from the frustrating cycle of repeated statements which are received, filed and not acted upon.'<sup>45</sup>

At a meeting concerning the Ecumenical Sharing of Resources in 1979, the consultation stated that '[the] basic assumptions and the fundamental issues ... are not new'; however, 'as in other areas, our practice has not kept up with our professed commitment.'<sup>46</sup> Throughout the 1980s, churches were encouraged to use the examples of restructuring undertaken by both CEVAA and CWM. Also, during this same time the studies on the Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel and Resources were completed and put forth many resolutions on how to restructure for more equitable relationships. However, when delegates met at Salvador in 1996, though acknowledging that much had changed, they still had to admit that 'much more remains to be done.'<sup>47</sup> Unfortunately, today this is still very much the case.

### 10.3 Does Partnership Have a Future?

At the International Missionary Council conference in Jerusalem (1928), Dr. Endicott, a delegate from Canada, closed the discussions on the relations between the Global and World churches with both an assessment of the current situation, as well as a hope for the future:

We must not be misled into thinking there are no serious difficulties in the relations between the younger and older churches. The people of other lands are quite aware of the difficulties, and I have not gone anywhere without realizing the sense of the need for deep changes.... The time has come for action. I hope that we shall deal with this subject in such a way that it will be impossible to raise this question in a council of this kind again.<sup>48</sup>

Unfortunately for Endicott, as well as for us today, while his assessment was correct, it became clear very quickly that his hopes for the future would not be realized.

Although the antecedents of partnership can be seen in the work of Anderson, Venn, Azariah, Zoo and others who advocated for the autonomy of the World churches at a

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<sup>45</sup> *Bangkok Assembly*, p. 104.

<sup>46</sup> 'Ecumenical Sharing of Resources Report, January 1979', p. 2.

<sup>47</sup> 'Reports of the Sections – IV: One Gospel – Diverse Expressions', p. 71.

<sup>48</sup> *Jerusalem Meeting: Relations Between the Younger and Older Churches*, pp. 189-190.

very early stage, the concept of Global/World church partnership also has strong ties to early and mid-twentieth century colonial debates. The term partnership has thus always existed in this tension, between the ideal of relationships between autonomous churches and the strong notion of trusteeship, with the churches of Global Christianity supervising and guiding the maturation of World churches. As a result, we also find that many of the same issues and barriers to partnership discussed a century ago are, to a large extent, still problematic today. For these reasons, partnership has continued to elude the churches of the ecumenical movement, despite that fact that over the past eighty years, many leaders from both Global and World churches have worked towards realizing its ideals of mutuality and solidarity.

When seeking to find the reasons for this, as well as a possible way forward, I believe that Sanneh's typology of churches as either Global or World, used throughout this thesis, can assist us. To review, Sanneh writes that Global Christianity 'is the faithful replication of Christian forms and patterns developed in Europe. ...It is, in fact, religious establishment and the cultural captivity of faith.'<sup>49</sup> He also aligns it closely to the idea of 'Christendom', noting that Global Christianity 'carries vestiges still of that root imperial phase.'<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, Sanneh notes that World Christianity 'is the movement of Christianity as it takes form and shape in societies that previously were not Christian. ...[It] is not one thing, but a variety of indigenous responses through more or less effective local idioms ... without necessarily the European Enlightenment frame.'<sup>51</sup>

When reviewing the history of partnership, especially since Edinburgh (1910), it is clear that these differences in worldviews, as described by Sanneh, have had, and continue to have, detrimental effects on the relationships between the churches of Global and World Christianity. At Edinburgh, the recorded discussions show that the majority of Global church delegates had condescending and paternalistic attitudes towards the emerging World churches. In response, V.S. Azariah stated that while the first missionaries were seen as fathers by their converts, 'the second and third generations, through the success of missionary work, has risen to the position when they do not any longer care to be treated like children....'<sup>52</sup> Azariah, while acknowledging the sacrifices made by missionaries to bring Christianity to India, told

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<sup>49</sup> Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity?*, p. 22.

<sup>50</sup> Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity?*, p. 23.

<sup>51</sup> Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity?*, p. 22.

<sup>52</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910: The History and Records*, p. 309.

Global church delegates that World Christians wanted more out of these relationships; they wanted friends. From Edinburgh until the present, many conferences, resolutions, and individuals have followed Azariah in calling for relationships of mutuality and equality.

It is also evident from the historical record that from at least Jerusalem (1928), major efforts were put into education programs to try and bring a new understanding of mission to Global Christians; a new understanding that would allow for changed relationships. However, when looking at the findings of ecumenical meetings during the last few decades, it becomes clear that even after eighty years of various educational efforts, Global church attitudes have not changed significantly.

Given this long history of paternalism, it seems clear that partnership between Global and World churches will continue to be unattainable, for Global Christianity's worldview, how it sees itself and others, is linked to the idea of 'Christendom', power, and control. Because of this, the issues traced throughout this thesis, namely the *home base, humanitarianism and development, authority, and rhetoric and reality*, will all continue to be problematic. For partnership to have any future, the churches of Global Christianity must stop seeing mission as expansion and give up the desire to remake others in their image. They must also understand that the lands of Global Christianity are no longer the center of the Christian faith, for, as Bediako has noted, the 'southward shift of the churches axis has ... given ... Christianity ... new "centres of universality"'.<sup>53</sup> In short, for efforts at partnership to have any chance of succeeding in the future, the churches of Global Christianity will need to become, in their worldview and ethos, World churches. While this may seem like an impossible task, a similar call was made at the recent Salvador CWME meeting in (1996) where delegates hoped for a

*shift in mission thinking and practice from colonial to post-colonial and from Eurocentric to polycentric ...*, dramatically [portraying] as never before that churches around the world have reached a critical point in the movement from being more or less homogeneous in faith, worship and life to a situation of theological and liturgical heterogeneity, rooted in a profound commitment to express Christian faith and witness in terms of particular local and cultural idioms.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Bediako, *Christianity in Africa*, p. 157.

<sup>54</sup> Duraisingh, 'Salvador: A Signpost of the New in Mission', p. 194.

If this hope is to be realized, it should be obvious by now that it will not be through the educational efforts and agency of the Global churches alone. Instead, it is only through the building of relationships and friendships, across cultural, racial, and ecclesiastical lines, that Global Christians can be led to see their faith in a different and new light; one that recognizes that Global Christianity is not the universal standard by which all others are judged, but is in fact simply another indigenized, local expression of faith. Ironically, and in a true example of ‘reverse mission’, just as World Christians were able to indigenize their faith through the agency of Global Christians, especially in vernacular translation, it is now the Global churches that need the agency and assistance of World Christians as they seek to understand the gospel in new ways. Recent ecumenical gatherings, realizing this, have started to focus on creating ‘space’ for interaction and the building of relationships between Global and World Christians, understanding that it may well be easier to ‘act people into new ways of thinking than to think people into new ways of acting.’<sup>55</sup> And while one can find voices noting the importance of relationships between Global and World Christians throughout the historical narrative, ‘the fact that the southward shift in ... Christianity’s center coincides with the epochal reversal in the direction and flow of global migrations’<sup>56</sup> has the potential to open up ‘space’ that has previously been unimaginable. One example of this is the fact that, as Hanciles notes,

new immigrants have transformed America into the most religiously diverse nation on the planet. ...[The] majority of ... new immigrants (at least 60 percent according to one survey) are Christians (from Africa, Asia, and Latin America) who are expressing their Christianity in languages, customs, forms of spirituality, and community formation that are almost as foreign to Americans as other religions. The new immigrant Christian communities are effectively “de-Europeanizing” American Christianity.<sup>57</sup>

While creating ‘space’ for Global and World Christians to meet formerly necessitated a long flight overseas, now World Christianity is, in many instances, right down the street. Because of these changes and shifting demographics, Global Christians not only have the opportunity to worship with World Christians, but to socialize, build relationships and friendships, and to find common cause on issues of social justice

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<sup>55</sup> Lawrence Gilley, a colleague who worked for a number of years in Africa, introduced me to this idea through a conversation we had regarding ecumenical partnerships.

<sup>56</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christianity*, p. 6.

<sup>57</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christianity*, p. 7. Andrew Walls also notes that this same phenomenon is occurring in Europe as well: cf., Walls, ‘Afterward: Christian Mission in a Five-hundred Year Context’, pp. 202-204.

that affect all in the communities in which we live. Most importantly, these relationships can create the 'space' for us to learn to see our universal faith lived out in its myriad of local and cultural expressions, including our own. As Sanneh notes, 'cross-cultural friendships ... are destined to influence the nature and character of international relations.'<sup>58</sup>

As the ecumenical movement looks towards Edinburgh's centenary celebrations and beyond, the most hopeful sign that ecumenical partnerships may have a future can be found in the desire, expressed at the most recent WCC Assembly in Port Alegre (2006), for transformed relationships between churches. As Samuel Kobia noted then, 'it is ... necessary to understand that emerging ... Southern Christianity is not just a transplant of Christendom of yester-centuries. ... What ... this challenges us to do is to see our faith in a radically new perspective. This we could do if we consider Christianity ... with new eyes and not just with the eyes of one particular region or theological perspective.'<sup>59</sup> If Global Christians can begin to see their faith in a 'radically new perspective', it may be possible for a new ecumenical World Christianity to emerge; an ecumenical Christianity where we can be not only partners, but friends.

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<sup>58</sup> Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity*, p. 64.

<sup>59</sup> Kobia, 'Celebrating Life – fiesta da vida', p. 44.

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